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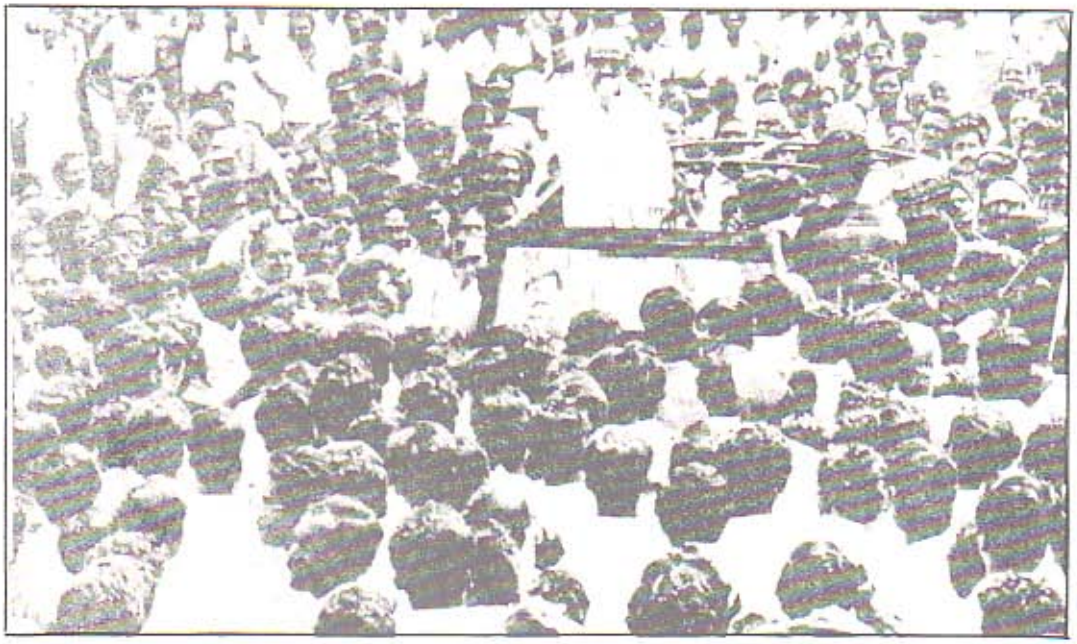
I am not against India or Rajiv Gandhi. I am only hurt by India's treachery.

—V. Prabhakaran

FAILURE OF INDIAN POLICY: BEATEN AT BOTH ENDS!

I am more Gandhian than any Indian

—J.R. Jayewardene



DMK president M. Karunanidhi exhorts volunteers to campaign against the IPKF 'hunt for LTTE leader V. Prabhakaran', before flagging off a convoy of 40 vehicles at Periyar statue. The four-day rally to Kanyakumari was organised by the confederation for protection of the rights of Eelam Tamils.

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VIOLENCE AGAINST MUSLIMS

To say that the plight of the Tamil speaking Muslim population in eastern Sri Lanka has reached a pathetic state is an understatement. The violence in these parts has left thousands of Muslims in a state of total helplessness. People have fled in their thousands from the villages in which they have traditionally lived.

As to who is responsible for this anti-Muslim violence is not exactly clear. The available evidence is contradictory. The Sri Lankan media, as usual, has been prompt to lay the blame at the doors of the LTTE, but the latter has denied any responsibility. The names of the other Tamil militant groups also have been mentioned for some acts of abduction, murder and arson.

The not so impartial correspondents of the Sri Lankan press also see a diabolical plot by Tamil militant groups to drive out the Muslims from the eastern province in advance of the contemplated referendum on the question of the merger of the northern and eastern provinces. They suggest that the Muslims, by and large, would vote against the merger proposal and hence the plot to drive them out. It is also contended that the Indian Peace Keeping Force which is present in large number in these parts is turning a blind eye to the violence against the Muslim population.

It must be recalled that, even before the arrival of the IPKF, during 1986 and early part of 1987, there were orchestrated Tamil-Muslim clashes. A special commission appointed by the government concluded that members of the security forces had a hand in many instances of instigating clashes. The government itself distributed arms to selected elements within the Muslim population and employed 'Muslim homeguards' in its war against Tamil Militant groups. There was uncontradicted evidence of thuggish elements being transported to the east to act as agents provocateurs and incite violence between the Tamil and Muslim communities. In the present situation, anti-India, anti-Accord and anti-Merger forces within and outside the government would appear to be engaged in instigating violence with a view to driving a wedge between the two communities which have lived in peace for centuries. The murder of prominent members of the Tamil and Muslim communities who were well known for their efforts to bring about amity between the two peoples must be regarded as part of this diabolical design.

In the context of the presence of the IPKF, it would seem that no further major state-aided Sinhala colonisation could take place. It is through fostering and provoking violence between the Muslim and Tamil people can the projected merger of the northern and eastern provinces be sabotaged. And to this end, sinister forces are at work.

It is in this context that the role of the extremist Muslim armed group, Al Jihad, and the sinister role played by Pakistan have to be viewed. It has been reported that the Al Jihad group was involved in an incident in Kalmunai in which seven Tamils and ten Muslims were killed and several houses set alight. An armed member of this group apprehended by the IPKF would appear to have confessed that several of its members had been trained in and armed with AK-47 rifles by Pakistan. Hand grenades with Pakistani ordnance factory markings have also been found.

Tamil militant groups should guard themselves against the error of falling prey to the machinations and provocations of these sinister forces and avoid involving themselves in violent incidents against Muslim civilians. The Muslim people have a common cause with other Tamils not only because they speak the same language. Both the communities have lived in the northern and eastern provinces and have made these areas their homeland. However, there is no doubt and it must be recognised, the Muslim people consider themselves as possessing a distinct national identity which they want to preserve and promote. It is in this context that the recent discussions (April 16 to 19) between a delegation of the Muslim United Front led by Dr. Badiudin Mohamed and the LTTE that took place in Madras and the joint statement issued thereafter are most welcome. The statement recognises and accepts that the Muslims, although speaking the Tamil language, possess a distinct national identity and that the northern and eastern provinces are as much their traditional homeland as are they for the Tamil people. The statement also spells out in detail the constitutional safeguards that the Muslim people should enjoy in a merged north-east entity, and adds that the Front and the LTTE would co-operate with the implementation of the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord without affecting rights and aspirations of the Tamil and Muslim peoples. Overall, the approach adopted by the two organisations not only reflects a mature appreciation of the respective rights, freedoms and aspirations of both the communities, but also will enable the restoration of mutual respect and understanding which unfortunately seem to have been severely damaged in the recent past.

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COLOMBO NEWS LETTER

by Chitnra

STRANGER THAN FICTION

Things are becoming curiouser and curiouser on the Tamil political front. The leader of the Peoples Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE), Uma Maheswaran, is reported to have had a two hour meeting with President Jayawardene recently. The PLOTE leader until recently was one of the most wanted men in Sri Lanka. He was sentenced to life imprisonment in absentia on alleged charges of bank robbery and murder. Now he and his organisation have established themselves in Colombo with relative ease. Now Uma Maheswaran not only seems to have regained his freedom presumably from the amnesty provided under the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement, but also appear to be regarded as that important as to have had the oppourtunity of an audience with the highest in the land. The Colombo-based newspapers also seem to be giving him a reasonable amount of publicity through widely reported interviews.

The Sixth Amendment to the Constitution of Sri Lanka is still in force and it bans any individual or group from directly or indirectly advocating the creation of a separate state in the island. All political parties are expected to make a solemn declaration and an oath eschewing separatism. Now that the Eelam Peoples Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) has been accepted by the Commissioner of Elections as a recognised political party, is it to be presumed that the EPRLF has already abandoned its earlier stand in regard to the establishment of a separate state of Tamil Eelam? Now that it is expected to participate in the proposed Provincial Council elections, it also must be taken for granted that the EPRLF candidates will take the oath forswearing separatism.

TALK ABOUT TALKS

That Indian High Commissioner in Colombo, Mr. Dixit, has become persona non grata with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) is no surprise following the IPKF offensive and subsequent developments. According to reports (Sunday Times of 13 March) many anti-Dixit posters have been adorning walls in Jaffna. Two of the questions posed in these posters are:

'Who is this Dixit to condemn the talks in Sri Lanka between Sri Lankan Ministers and the LTTE?'

'We conduct talks on our sovereign soil with our government. Who is this Dixit to grumble about this?'

The sentiments expressed in the phrase, **'our sovereign soil with our government'** is most revealing about the qualitiative change brought about by recent events. It is said adversity turns the worst of enemies into best of friends. Now 'Mother India' is accused of 'imperial designs' and Colombo has become 'our government'. The fact that Dilip Yogi of the LTTE held talks with some Sri Lankan Ministers has already been confirmed. But what has not been confirmed is that Yogi was taken for the secret talks from his hideout dressed like a Sinhala soldier in a Sri Lankan Air Force helicopter.

In the absence of any confirmation by either party to these secret talks, reports appearing in newspapers indicated that they centred around the proposal that Colombo would agree to the northern province being under an interim administration which will be in the total control of the LTTE for five years and in return the LTTE would abandon its insistence for a merger of the northern and eastern provinces. Having asserted that the merger of these two provinces was a non-negotiable demand, it is highly improbable that the LTTE would have agreed to such a proposal.

The moves by Colombo for direct secret talks with the LTTE was regarded as an attempt to upstage New Delhi. The Indian demonstrable anger was reflected at a press conference given by Dixit in Colombo. He said, 'India has lost over 400 of its men in Sri Lanka. No unilateral agreement outside the framework of the Accord can be implemented'. He added that 'simultaneous proposals, which are being discussed and about which I have heard from my sources will destroy the Accord'. Dixit's outburst provoked predictable responses in the Sri Lankan media which condemned him for 'gross interference' and questioned the right of India to challenge the right of 'Sri Lankan Ministers to talk to our own citizens'.

New Delhi was not prepared to be upstaged by Colombo and this became evident with confirmed reports of 'talks' between Indian government officials and LTTE stalwarts in Madras. It was this process which led to Raheem and Johny of the LTTE being transported by Indian Air Force plane to Vavuniya to establish contact with LTTE leader V. Prabhakaran. But the mission unfortunately ended in a tragic debacle when the IPKF shot Johny dead allegedly by mistake when he was returning after contact with Prabhakaran. The IPKF's explanation was that Johny's killing was due to a breakdown in communication between two contingents of the IPKF, but the LTTE accused India of a breach of faith.

Pressure in India by opposition parties and exigencies of the electoral volatile situation in Tamil Nadu have compelled New Delhi to change its previous intransigence and continue to talk about talks, at least informally, with the LTTE. The Indian Foreign Minister, Natwar Singh told Parliament that the door was always open to the LTTE to talk with India. It would seem that in these 'talks', the LTTE is seeking to resuscitate the agreement it came to with Dixit on September 28 last year under which an interim administration was to be set up to cover the northern and eastern provinces with the LTTE in dominant control.

It has now become Sri Lanka's turn to complain about New Delhi having 'talks' with LTTE. According to a front page report titled 'Lanka Protests Indian Secret Moves' in the Island of 17 March, Colombo had lodged a protest with India that the latter had violated the Agreement with Colombo that no negotiations would be held with the LTTE without the concurrence of the government of Sri Lanka. It would seem that Colombo is no longer willing to the proposal to set up an interim administration. It is argued by Colombo that since the Provincial Council law has already been enacted, any new administration in the Tamil areas must be on the basis of results of the Provincial Council elections which the government of Sri Lanka is prepared to hold at any time.

TULF DILEMMA

Have the TULF leaders overstayed their welcome in India? It seems to be so judging from the speech by Rajiv Gandhi who is reported to have said that the TULF leaders 'would do well to stop talking jurisprudence and get back to their villages in the north and start taking an active part in the affairs of their people'.

New Delhi seems to consider that the TULF's role is essential to establish a pluralist administrative set up following the projected Provincial Council elections. After all, the TULF leaders were the elected representatives of the Tamil people until they were ousted from Parliament under the Sixth Amendment to the Constitution, and they should re-establish their positions among their own people. The thinking appears to be that Tiger dominance over the Tamils, which New Delhi wants to cut down to size, would continue so long as the TULF leaders keep away from their people.

Reliable reports emanating from TULF sources in Madras confirm that its leaders including A. Amirthalingam, M. Sivasithamparam and R. Sampanthan have already decided to return to the island. To start with, they are likely to remain in Colombo. The question of their physical security must be seriously agitating their minds, particularly in the context of the recent murder of TULF ex-Senator, the 72

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STRINGENT CONDITIONS FOR FISHING

The Joint Operations Command of the Sri Lankan armed forces has announced stringent conditions under which fishing will be permitted in the waters along northern and eastern coasts of the island.

The conditions included:

(a) In the Northern area between Myliddy and Point Pedro, from 6a.m. to 5p.m. only and in the Jaffna lagoon, with permission of IPKF in location.

(b) In the Eastern area from Chundikulam to Kumuna, both by day and night in Batticaloa, with the approval of Security Force Commander in Liaision with the IPKF.

(c) Maximum distance, up to 5 miles from coast.

(d)Maximum no. of crew four persons.

(e) ID cards to be carried, or permits in specified areas issued by security forces.

(f) (i) For inboard engines (vallams), not more than 36 HP (ii) Out board motors northern area maximum 08 HP. Eastern area maximum 15 HP. Only 01 OBM permitted. Spare OBMs not to be carried.

(g) Continuously light up craft at night. No movement will be permitted after nets are laid. Indicate directions of nets at night using torch light when challenged by Naval vessels.

(h) Leave shore before curfew hours and arrive after curfew hours for those engaged in night fishing (Eastern area only). Night fishing in the North is not permitted.

(j) Immediately stop engines and bring boat to a halt when approached by air craft-helicopters.

(k) Fishing will not be permitted in harbours.

(l) Colour codes for each district are as follows:

Chundikulam — Purple, Mullativu — dark green, TCO — red, BCO — orange and AMP — brown.

Boat to be painted as follows with registered Nos-Names vallams — on top of engine canopy and Fibre Glass Dinghy on forward canopy at bows. Nos-names to be painted in white with minimum of 12" lettering.

As the above system will be reviewed in two weeks, difficulties encountered or suggestions should be intimated to this headquarters.

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year old S. Nadarajah. It may be recalled that two TULF former MPs, V. Dharmalingam and M. Alalasundaram, were murdered allegedly by members of a Tamil militant group in 1985, and since then the TULF's political or physical presence in the Tamil areas has been virtually non-existent.

The subject of the return of the TULF leaders and their participation in the proposed Provincial Council elections would appear to have been discussed when they recently met Krishnakumar (Kittu) of the LTTE in Madras. Recent statements attributed to the TULF are said to have been made to create the necessary climate to enable their return. The President of the TULF, M. Sivasithamparam, and its General Secretary Amirthalingam have publicly stated that Tamil problems could not be solved without the full participation of the LTTE and that the TULF was prepared to accord any number of seats to the LTTE in the proposed elections to the Provincial Council. However, unconfirmed reports indicate that the LTTE is not averse to the return of the TULF leaders so long as Amirthalingam keeps out of active politics.

CITIZENS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KILLED

Arumugam Velmurugu, the Chairman of the Citizens Committee of Kalmunai in eastern Sri Lanka, was abducted and killed by a gang of four armed young men. Velmurugu who was 51 years old at the time of his murder was a retired teacher and a former TULF District Development Council Member.

Four unidentified youths had called at the victim's house took him away by force in a car despite his wife's desperate pleadings. Two minutes after Velmurugu was taken away, a gunshot was heard from the direction of the car. Hours later his body was found at Kalmunaikadu, a predominantly Muslim village three miles away from his residence.

Valmurugu was highly respected and loved person in the area and soon after the news spread about his murder, posters appeared on vehicles and cars condemning the killing of a man who had done yeomen service to the community.

BISHOP'S HOUSE SEARCHED BY IPKF

IPKF personnel searched the Batticaloa Catholic Bishop's House and the St. Mary's and St. Anthony's churches on suspicion that the person who hurled a grenade at a convoy of IPKF vehicles a shortwhile earlier was hiding there. During this search on 22 March, Bishop Kingsley Swampillai and about 25 other priests were asked to stand out as the troops carried out the search.

Chaos reigned briefly in the Batticaloa town when the grenade exploded near the IPKF convoy moving along Central road and damaged a vehicle in the explosion although there were no casualties among IPKF personnel. However a civilian is reported to have been injured.

CIVILIAN FLIGHTS FROM PALALY

INDIA and SRI LANKA have decided to link their capitals direct by air and also to open Palaly airport in the island's north for India's domestic airlines, authoritive sources said in Colombo.

Officials of the two countries have to work out the details for opening of the Palaly airport in Jaffna peninsula for commercial operation of the Indian Airlines and the air-link between Delhi and Colombo, the sources said.

Civil flights from Palaly would be till Tiruchinapalli in Tamil Nadu, they said.

The decision was taken during a two-day conference of top civil aviation and defence officials of the two countries they said.

At the meeting the Sri Lankan government also agreed to do away with certain restrictions in the air travel between the two countries.

The conference also discussed in detail the issue of air security and agreed on the measures to be adopted, they said.

MUSLIMS FORCED TO FLEE

Armed men set fire to several houses in some villages in eastern Amparai forcing nearly 1500 Muslims to flee from their homes.

About 500 families from Alayadivempu, Allamkulam, Ampalatharu, Vellakalthottam, Kolamaruthuvali and Vanagama had arrived at Akkaraipattu on 24 March seeking refuge.

More than 1500 Muslims, including men, women and children, had already sought refuge at the Attalaichenai Teachers Training College and a few schools at Akkaraipattu, according to Citizens Committee sources.

AUSTRALIAN AID FOR REFUGEES

The Australian government will contribute 200,000 dollars to a United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) special program of assistance for refugees who returned to Sri Lanka.

The Australian Foreign Minister, Mr. Bill Hayden said that the conflict in Sri Lanka had left hundreds of thousands of displaced people from various ethnic origins. Their number was estimated at 430,000 including 350,000 in the Jaffna district. A further 135,000 were now living in south India.

Mr. Hayden said that the Australian contribution would be used to establish transit centres, provide for registration and medical screening and for the issue of relief packages of household kits and food supplies.

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Tamil Areas — Situation Report

THE IPKF AND ARBITRARY/ILLEGAL DETENTIONS

The IPKF is known to have a detention camp at Kankesanturai and another at Palaly near the airport. According to a Colombo newspaper, there are 390 detenus, including 6 females at the former camp (the position as was known at the beginning of March).An unspecified but larger number is reliably reported to be held at the Palaly camp. Smaller numbers of detenus are also held in make-shift cubicles or enclosures adjoining many house buildings, popularly called mini-camps, where following the Indian'saturation strategy' the IPKF has billeted some of their men.

Several parents, spouses and close relatives of arrested or missing persons have visited the IPKF Jaffna Town Commandant's office and the many IPKF camps in search of their near and dear ones. Some have made numerous trips to these camps and yet received no information about the whereabouts of the arrested persons. Others have been promised that their arrested relatives would be released early but the releases have not materialised in most cases though the period of detention has exceeded three months.

People interested in the issue of basic human rights are wondering whether the detenus are being held by the IPKF under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) and whether the Sri Lanka government has delegated powers to the IPKF under the PTA and regulations framed under it or, whether the IPKF is acting under Indian Laws and Regulations. One of the parents has reported that he had been asked to wait till procedures were completed and papers received back from Rao. (not Mr.Rao but very probably RAW, the Indian Intelligence Service).

TORTURE AND INHUMAN TREATMENT

The IPKF is holding detenus in crowded, ill-ventilated conditions. In one instance an underground air raid shelter serves as a place of confinement. A number of persons arrested by the IPKF are stated to have subsequently died in custody. In a case reported from Chavakachcheri, a youth was arrested by the IPKF on 22.12.87. This youth was beaten right through the night of 22.12.87 in full view of other arrested persons. By morning the skin in some parts of the body of this youth had peeled off. A week or so later, he died in IPKF custody. The IPKF is also merciful in that, before they disposed of the body, they called the father and allowed him to see only the face of his dead son. The father was also told that his son died by his own hand taking cyanide.

'DISAPPEARANCES' AND MISSING PERSONS

Parents and spouses have reported the 'disappearances' of their children and married partners. In a specific case from Jaffna town, a man has not been able to trace so far his wife and three daughters taken away by the IPKF in full view of his neighbours on 12.11.87. Another case is that of Mr. Renganathan, a government school teacher. The IPKF took him away from his Kopay residence on 16.11.87 in spite of the pleas of his weeping wife and children. The wife and children together with relatives have paid innumerable visits to IPKF camps without any encouraging news. Seventeen year old Yasotharan Thangarajah, a GCE Advanced Level student of Jaffna Central College and who excelled in his studies as evidenced by his GCE O/L results, was taken from his Jaffna residence by the IPKF on the morning of 17.12.87. His distraught mother, a widow, has yet to find him (as reported on March 1). A married woman with five small children from Vaddukoddai complained about the 'disappearance' of her husband who was arrested by the IPKF on 08.1.88. An IPKF officer gave evasive replies and tried to console her by sending her free rations.

RANDOM SHOOTING AFTER GRENADE EXPLOSION

At least 25 persons were injured, nine of them seriously, when policemen and IPKF personnel fired indiscriminately after an unidentified person lobbed a hand grenade at the Batticaloa police quarters on 23 March. As tension mounted following civilian casualties, an indefinite curfew was imposed which has since been lifted.

sources, at least three school children were among the nine who were seriously injured.

All activities in the town came to a standstill with government offices, schools and business establishments putting up shutters immediately after the incident. Quite a number of buildings were also damaged due to the

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CIVILIANS KILLED

Seven Tamil civilians, including women and children, were killed when IPKF personnel fired back in response to an attack on one of their patrol party at Nedunkerny, 27 miles off Vavuniya, on 23 March.

According to the Vavuniya District Citizens Committee sources, the seven victims included four members from one family. The mother of this family who could not endure the tragedy committed suicide by taking poison.

According to the Citizens Committee, this was not the first time that civilians have fallen victims of indiscriminate fire by the IPKF.

'WARNING' BY LTTE

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) have issued a 'warning' to the public in the northern Jaffna peninsula against having any unwarranted relations with the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF).

Headlined 'WARNING', the leaflet which has been widely distributed in Jaffna states:

'The Indian Army, trying to blind the Tamil public from seeing the Army's despicable acts of rape, torture and so on is also indulging in humbugs, such as Indian Soldiers managing Tamil women.'

In this state of affairs, some traitors of our race among us, urged by motives of personal profit, are not only betraying the Tamil race, but are also operating as the paid agents of the Indian Forces of Conquest.

'We would like to have it known, that prompt action ending in death sentence will be taken against those among us engaging especially in the following activities, namely:

a) Persons furnishing information to, acting as paid agents of, or having needless relations or connections with the Indian Army of Conquest.

b) Persons needlessly establishing family-relationships or any other relationships with the Indian Army of Conquest or members of the families of such persons.

c) Persons, who making themselves out as leaders of the people, collaborate with the Indian Army of Conquest.

ARREST OF TAMIL YOUTHS IN COLOMBO

Tamil youths continue to be harassed by police. Six Tamil youths were arrested from Pettah, the trading quarter of Colombo on 1.3.88. Nineteen of them were arrested on 3.3.88 from Wellawatte, a predominantly Tamil pocket in Colombo; fifteen were arrested in Bambalapitiya, another residential area on 4.3.88. A further 40 were arrested in the

PEOPLE & POLITICS by Shanthi

THE CASE OF PRESIDENT JAYAWARDENE Vs ANURA BANDARANAIKE

THE one hundred million rupee defamation suit brought against President Jayawardene by the Opposition Leader Anura Bandaranaike was dismissed by the District Court of Colombo on 29 March. But the case, though not heard for want of jurisdiction, is important mainly for two reasons.

Firstly, it highlighted the fact that the wideranging measure of immunity enjoyed by President Jayawardene under the Sri Lankan constitution elevates him to the point of being above the law. The age old constitutional maxim that the King can do no wrong is more true of Jayawardene's position than that of the present day British monarch. For the monarch is no more than a constitutional figure-head with little or no executive power. But Jayawardene is the executive President invested with extraordinary wide powers unknown in any democracy. He is the Head of State and Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces. He is the head of the Cabinet of Ministers and appoints and dismisses the Prime Minister and Ministers. He himself holds several cabinet portfolios, but does not sit in parliament to answer for his actions. He appoints the Chief Justice and all Judges of the Supreme Court, Court of Appeal and the High Court. He has the power to suspend many of the rights, freedoms and safeguards provided for in the Constitution by invoking the Public Security Ordinance under which he could declare a state of emergency. Besides his constitutional position, he is also the leader of the ruling party and engages in the day to day controversy of party politics. He also enjoys absolute immunity from any prosecution or suit in respect of anything he has done or omits to do either in his official or private capacity. Nor can he be cited or called as a witness before any court or tribunal. Thus the President of Sri Lanka, both in theory and practice, can do any wrong, but cannot be questioned or punished for any such wrong, however grave it might be.

Secondly, the dispute between the President and Anura brought out into the open the secret plots and machinations that the two engaged in while they were thick as thieves, and when thieves fall out, the truth comes out.

The dispute all started with a speech made by President Jayawardene on February 18 at the National Management Conference in the course of which he alleged that Anura was a member of the mob which attacked the building housing the Ministry of Teaching Hospitals on July 29 last year. It may be violence in and around Colombo following the signing of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement.

Anura appeared to be incensed by the accusation and made it public that if not for the constitutional immunity (Article 35(1)), he would sue Jayawardene for defamation. President Jayawardene wrote to Anura obliging with the promise that he would waive the immunity he was entitled to on condition that Anura was willing to get into the witness box and answer certain questions which the President listed.

Among the various questions listed, one disclosed that, as far back as in 1973 when the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) was in power with Mrs. Bandaranaike (Anura's mother) as Prime Minister, Anura met Jayawardene and sought his help in respect of an alleged threat of a conspiracy to overthrow his mother's government. According to Anura, the main architect of this conspiracy was Kumar Rupasinghe, the then son-in-law of the Prime Minister. At that time it was no secret that Rupasinghe, being the husband of the Prime Minister's eldest daughter Sunethra, wielded considerable influence with his mother-in-law and inside the government. Anura who was not even an MP then, was very jealous of Rupasinghe whom he resented. Despite Anura's temper tantrums and occasional threat to sit before his later father's Samadhi and perform Sathyagraha, Mrs. Bandaranaike relied heavily on her energetic eldest son-in-law, Rupasinghe. It was the intense jealousy and hostility that Anura developed towards Rupasinghe which made the former to seek the help of the arch political enemy of his mother's government, Mr. Jayawardene who was then Leader of the Opposition. The present disclosure by President Jayawardene reminds one of the No-confidence motion moved by him in early 1974 in the course of which Jayawardene directly accused Rupasinghe of being linked with a secret conspiracy by the left to wrest control of the government by unseating Mrs. Bandaranaike. It is now clear that it was Anura who supplied the information on the basis of which Jayawardene mounted his attack on Rupasinghe.

The other question listed by President Jayawardene was about the fact that Anura, in his eagerness to enter Parliament, sought and obtained Jayawardene's promise that the UNP would not put up a candidate to contest Anura in case the SLFP nominated him for a vacant seat.

The most important secret revealed by Jayawardene was that Anura had in ing of the referendum to postpone elections and extend the life of parliament, although the SLFP was vehemently opposed to the government's move. According to Jayawardene, the reason given by Anura for his conduct was that if there was a general election, power in the SLFP would go into the hands of his second brother-in-law, Vijaya Kumaranatunga who was married to Anura's younger sister Chandrika. President Jayawardene says that when the results of the referendum giving victory to the government was announced, Anura expressed his happiness.

Again, it was no secret that Anura did not get along well, personally or politically, with Kumaranatunga who with his charisma and popularity began to wield considerable influence in the SLFP. Anura tried to build his own faction with the support of members of the old guard of the party and become its undisputed leader at a time when Mrs. Bandaranaike had been expelled from Parliament and deprived of her civic rights. When his attempt failed, he caused a split in the party and formed a separate block with Mr. Maitripala Senanaike. The government of President Jayawardene gave every support and encouragement to Anura's faction — the police raided the official SLFP's headquarters and eventually sealed it using emergency powers. Presumably, Anura was at this time in cohort with President Jayawardene who was happy to offer his help all too willingly to break up the SLFP.

The prodigal son, Anura, was welcomed back to the SLFP by the time the Presidential elections were held. Anura staked his claim to be the SLFP's candidate in the context of Mrs. B's incapacity to contest. But Mr. Kobbekaduwa was chosen as the SLFP's Presidential candidate with the strong backing from Vijaya Kumaranatunga. At the time of the election campaign, many in the SLFP alleged that Anura had worked against Mr. Kobbekaduwa so as to ensure victory for President Jayawardene with whom Anura was presumed to be in the best of terms. To what extent Anura was instrumental in the subsequent detention of Vijaya Kumaranatunga on alleged 'naxalite' conspiracy charges is uncertain.

Coming back to the present dispute between the two erstwhile collaborators, Anura filed the suit claiming one hundred million rupees from Jayawardene for defamation of his character. Consideration of the question whether Anura's character is such that it could be defamed to the extent of one hundred million rupees is not relevant or necessary. In his plaint, Anura stated that by alleging that he was a member of the mob that attacked the Ministry of Teaching Hospitals, President Jayawardene had falsely and maliciously caused him pain of mind and

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IS INDIA HUNTING FOR PRABHAKARAN?

No, said an Indian official spokesman in New Delhi on March 21. The denial came in the wake of mounting concern and warnings from Tamil Nadu. 'If Prabhakaran is killed there will be grave consequences in Tamil Nadu', New Delhi was warned. The warning came from practically all party leaders except the Congress-I and the Communists. In a rare expression of solidarity DMK leader Karunanidhi, both AIADMK factions — Janaki Ramachandran and Jayalalitha, cine star Sivaji Ganeshan, DK leader Veeramani and Kamaraj Congress leader Nedumaran, they all warned New Delhi individually. And so quickly came the reaction from the powers in Delhi. It was threatening to become an explosive issue and that was something they could not afford, particularly when the Congress-I was already facing an uphill task in the forthcoming Tamil Nadu elections. The question now being asked is: How sincere was the denial? How much credence can one attach to statements made by official spokesmen from New Delhi?

The New Delhi report said: India described as 'baseless' news agency reports emanating from Colombo that the Indian Peace-Keeping Force (IPKF) was 'hunting' for LTTE leader V. Prabhakaran in its present operations. An official spokesman further told newsmen that these reports gave a 'distorted perspective' of the IPKF operations. 'The operations of the IPKF are not aimed at hunting for any individual', he said... Asked whether a member of the LTTE had been sent from Madras as a messenger from the Prime Minister to talk to the top LTTE leadership and had been killed in firing, the spokesman said the person concerned 'Johnny' had been sent by the LTTE itself. He had been killed in a cross-fire in the northern province, he confirmed. Asked if yet another LTTE leader 'Raheem' had gone with 'Johnny' the spokesman asserted that he was in Madras at present. 'I will not go into any specifics', he replied when asked if any message from the Prime Minister was being sent to the LTTE leadership.

Meanwhile, a UNI report from Colombo, quoting informed sources, said 'Johnny' who was providing escort to LTTE leader Balasubramaniam Canagaratnam alias 'Raheem' was killed when the two were returning after making contact with Prabhakaran. 'Raheem' and 'Johnny' had been earlier dropped by an Indian Air Force helicopter somewhere on the borders of the jungles of Vavuniya district. 'Raheem' was carrying a message to Prabhakaran from Sathasivam Krishnakumar alias 'Kittu' former Jaffna commander of the LTTE. Both 'Kittu' and 'Raheem' had been under house arrest in Madras since October. Kittu had been in touch with Indian officials recently on ending the conflict in the island, the sources said.

On March 23, the LTTE alleged in a statement made in Madras that the Government of India was 'responsible' for the death of its member 'Lt.Col.' Johnny in the Vavuniya area in the northern province of Sri Lanka. Relating its version of the details of what had happened, the LTTE alleged that the circumstances in which 'Lt.Col' Johnny died reflected a 'breach of faith'. The LTTE said it had proposed unconditional talks and had requested the Government of India to institute a ceasefire. It had reluctantly sent 'Lt.Col' Johnny and Raheem to Vavuniya from Madras on March 5 in the 'larger interests of the people of Tamil Eelam'. But Johnny and Raheem were not even given identity cards by the Government of India. Instead, they were told that if they were intercepted by the Indian Peace-Keeping Force, they could ask it to get in touch with its Vavuniya camp. However Johnny was killed in the IPKF operations.

The question now being asked is: If the Indian Air Force thought it necessary to airlift Raheem and Johnny from Madras to Vavuniya, was it part of a genuine effort to initiate a dialogue with the LTTE leadership, or was it a ruse to trace the whereabouts of the LTTE leader?

On the day after the Delhi denial, President Venkataraman was on a visit to Tamil Nadu. DMK president M.Karunanidhi met the President at Raj Bhavan and urged him to use his good offices to initiate a process for a ceasefire by the IPKF and arrange for talks with the LTTE. In a letter handed over to the President, Mr.Karunanidhi said Tamils all over the world were shocked by the reported manhunt launched by the IPKF to capture LTTE leader V.Prabhakaran 'dead or alive — most probably dead'.

Speculation on the question of Prabhakaran's safety was first fuelled by a UNI report from Colombo datelined March 19, which said: 'The search by the Indian Peace'Keeping Force for V. Prabhakaran, the elusive chief of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, seems to have narrowed down to a triangular stretch of land in north Sri Lanka, according to military analysts here. They said judging from last week's operations, code-named 'Vajra' had resulted in the killing or capture of a number of hard-core LTTE men and women and the smashing of the group's operational headquarters near Oddusuddan, the area of the operations extends from Devil's Point, north of Mannar on the western coast to Mullaitivu on the eastern coast and Kuchcaveli, about 60 km south of Mullaitivu. There are large tracts of secondary rain forests with thick undergrowth in the area, providing ideal hideouts. The sources said Prabhakaran had apparently chosen the area for retreat in the hope that the onset of the monsoon in about a month's time would hamper the IPKF's operations and give the group time to recoup from its recent reverses. . .'

Contd. from page 6

injured his personal and political credit and reputation.

The case, if it went to trial, offered the prospect of a sensational legal battle raising the probability of a lot of political skulduggery in which Anura was involved along with the UNP as against leading members of his own party and family coming out into the open. But it was not to be.

In spite of the so-called voluntary waiver of presidential immunity, the District Court held that the Court was precluded from entertaining or continuing any proceedings against the President who was conferred with 'blanket immunity' under the Constitution. The judge added that the absolute immunity of the President may conceptually be inconsistent with the principles of democracy and sovereignty of the people, but it is not for the Court to question the validity of any particular provision of the Constitution.

PLOTE LEADER MEETS JAYAWARDENE

The leader of the Peoples Liberation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE), Uma Maheswaran, met President Jayawardene for nearly two hours on April 8. National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali and Minister for Information and State Affairs Anandatissa de Alwis were also present during the discussions.

Following this meeting, a statement issued by PLOTE said that President Jayawardene had sought the assistance of the PLOTE leader to enable the government to hold elections in the northern and eastern provinces and to bring an end to the violence there.

The statement added that Uma Maheswaran had said that his organisation would not stand in the way of a solution to ensure a peaceful future for the Tamil people, and that in the present circumstances would not upset any arrangement for an interim solution that recognised needs of the Tamil people. However, as pre-condition, the government should take the following steps:

(a) Unconditional release of all political detainees, whether they be Sinhalese, Tamils or Muslims, belonging to all political groups including those belonging to the LTTE;
(b) To bring an end to the military action undertaken by the IPKF under the pretext of searching for Tigers;
(c) The IPKF should stop the arrest of those social workers and militants who are working among the people to provide relief and rehabilitation; and
(d) To stop all attempts at forced colonisation and to dismantle all such forced colonisation which has already taken place in the Tamil areas.

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COMMENTARY by D.B.S. Jeyaraj

● Amnesty
● Murders in the East
● Chasing Prabakaran

'If these Sinhalese, Tamils, or Muslims, wherever they may be and whoever they are, give up violence, surrender arms and accept the agreement, I shall grant them an amnesty and remove the proscriptions that prevent them from participating in democratic elections. I invite them to join the other parties in this non-violent and humane democratic process.'

The words referred to above, excerpted from President Jayewardene's address to Parliament last month has given hope to many a political offender behind and outside bars. The Indo-Lanka Accord in terms of Clause 2:11 stipulates 'General amnesty to political and other prisoners now held in custody under the P.T.A. and other emergency laws and to combatants as well as to those persons accused, charged and or convicted under these laws . . .' Several clauses of the hastily drafted Indo-Lanka Accord have been disputed in its implementary stages. One such clause is the one that relates to an amnesty.

New Delhi feels that the amnesty covers all types of offences in all parts of Sri Lanka prior to the accord being signed on July 29th. Colombo's contention however is that the amnesty extends to only offences committed in the Northern and Eastern Provinces. The political rationale behind Colombo's view is that (1) it would be politically tenuous to grant amnesty to offenders who have harmed civilians in the seven provinces outside the North and East, (2) it would be politically embarrassing to release Tamils committing offences in the south when Sinhala extremists are under detention for alleged offences in the south.

The end result of all this was that in the aftermath of the accord certain categories of alleged offenders were not being released. The growing disenchantment peaked when 17 Tigers including the Trincomalee Tiger leader, Pulendran alias Amman were arrested in October '87 off Point Pedro. Pulendran was suspected of being the perpetrator of the Habarana massacre where 147 persons were killed. The crime was committed outside the North and East. So there was mounting pressure on bringing the Tigers to Colombo.

It is in that context that President Jayewardene's reiteration of the amnesty offer has to be viewed. Already it has fuelled hopes to the extent of hundreds of detenues writing letters to President Jayewardene. Their basic position is that they eschew violence and that the question of laying down arms does not arise because they are already incarcerated. It is learnt that these detenues are now required to file affidavits to the above effect. The moving force behind this manoeuvre is Mr. Kumar Ponnambalam of the Tamil Congress.

Interpretation

The interpretation of the Amnesty clause by Colombo was particularly harsh on the Eelam Revolutionary Organisation (EROS).

The flashpoint of tension for the EROS arose when Niranjan alias Haran along with three others were arrested by the STF at Batticaloa. Haran had earlier been detained by the IPKF on suspicion for nearly two months. The four EROS men were brought to Colombo. The others except Haran were released following intervention of the Indian envoy Mr.J.N. Dixit. The rationale for Haran's continuous detention was the same as that of Pulendran. Haran was suspected of being the man behind the EROS bombing of Oberoi Hotel in 1984. Jyotindra Nath Dixit strained every diplomatic sinew and got Haran released from Sri Lankan custody. He was taken to Palaly and is being kept in IKPF custody. Since Colombo still feels that the amnesty does not apply to Haran, he is being detained to be available for interrogation.

But Haran does not seem to be the kind which is content to be in a state of 'benevolent incarceration'. In a letter dated March 17 he has written to Mr. Dixit for the third time. Stating that keeping him under Indian custody on the orders of the Sri Lankan Government was ridiculous Haran urges his immediate release. He also says that he would commence a fast unto death campaign. He would await Mr. Dixit's reply until March 26 before initiating the campaign.

The views expressed by Sri Lanka at the recent UN Human Rights Commission sessions in Geneva seems to suggest that Colombo still interpret the amnesty as being applicable to the North and East only. Mr. Dixit has already expressed concern over these views to the Sri Lankan Government.

The contradictory interpretations of the amnesty is another indicator of the hasty manner in which the accord was signed. A clear definition of the amnesty would have averted many a tragedy and controversy.

The post-Indo-Lanka Agreement scenario has seen many fast unto death campaigns aimed at focussing attention on crucial issues and winning demands. If and when Haran fasts the issue would be the amnesty. Haran's case is now a test case. His release or continued detention would determine whether the amnesty applies to the entire country or the North and East alone.

● Murders in the East

'Who killed Cock Robin?'

The immediate question in the Amparai district, 'who killed Vel Murugu of Pandiruppu? The previous question in the Batticaloa district, 'who killed Ahamed Lebbe of Kattankudi?' The earlier question of the Trincomalee district, 'who killed Abdul Majeed of Kinniya?

Given the complex nature and peculiar nuances of Eastern Province actualities one would ponder a great deal before venturing out with an answer.

There is a difference in the case of mass killings. The past weeks have seen a series of massacres. The majority of those killed have been from the Sinhalese community interspersed with incidents where the minorities, mainly Tamils have been victims. Yet in the brutal carnage one could detect a method in the madness, motive in the mayhem. Hypersensitivity bordering on xenophobia towards the issue of demographical changes in the province along with the Mosaic tradition of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth has led to genocidal frenzy.

The deaths of ex-Senator Nadarajah, Mannar GA Makbool, Communist Party leader Vijayanandan, Mutur and Sammanturai AGA's and a host of lesser-known personalities it was not difficult to ascertain who the killers were. In some cases the Tigers claimed credit.

One cannot however rush into conclusions about the deaths of former Deputy Minister and ex-MP for Mutur Mr. Abdul Majeed; former DDC member and Citizens' Committee Chairman Mr. Vel Murugu; former T.C. Chairman and Citizens' Committee Chairman Mr. Ahmed Lebbe. Some have openly pointed the accusing finger at the LTTE. The LTTE certainly has to bear its share of the guilt but the objective seeker of truth must be on guard against the common tendency to make a scapegoat of a Tiger. Two of those killed were called off their homes. Abdul Majeed was shot dead in his compound while Vel Murugu was abducted and killed. Ahmed Lebbe was shot while on the pillion of a motorcycle.

There is a common factor among the three. All of them were persons who worked hard in thought, word and deed for Tamil-Muslim unity. Mr. Abdul Majeed was a tower of strength to the TULF during the 1981 DDC elections where despite the Tamils being only a third of the district Trincomalee was won by that party. In recent times he rendered yeoman service in reducing tensions between the Muslims and the Tamils, the Muslims and the IPKF. After his death a leading Muslim politician remarked publicly that Homeguards were responsible for the killing. A newspaper reported it and was never openly contradicted.

In the case of Mr. Ahmed Lebbe it cannot be forgotten that he helped the LTTE open a branch in Kattankudi at the residence of a close relative. He played a mediator role in the clash between the LTTE and the Jihad. More importantly he was elected Vice-President of a newly-formed Muslim

(Contd. on next page)

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organisation which openly supported the North-East merger. Shortly afterwards he resigned his post allegedly under pressure from a fundamentalist Islamic group. He was killed a few days later. In the ensuing panic eight Tamils were abducted by a Muslim group carrying sophisticated arms.

Contrary to the impression that Mr. Vel Murugu was against the fast knowledgeable circles assert that Mr. Vel Murugu was the motivating force behind the fasts. The fasts were in sympathy of the Mothers' Front fast. Mr. Vel Murugu who helped pour oil on troubled waters during Tamil-Muslim clashes in Kalmunai was instrumental in getting Muslim youths also to fast in support. The IPKF took great umbrage at this and forcibly broke up the fast threatening that 'Muslims should not fast'. They were supported by anti-LTTE groups. Mr. Vel Murugu had then coaxed the fasting persons to call off the fast to avoid violence. Also the car used by the killers was found in Karaitivu which could not be described as a Tiger stronghold.

The Eastern Province cocktail consists of various admixtures like the Police, the STF, the Homeguards, the IPKF, the LTTE, the non-LTTE Tamil groups and the Muslim armed groups. Speaking to a cross-section of sources emanating from Security, Police, Journalist, Citizen and religious circles a broad answer by no means conclusive emerges. All indicators are that:

The Killing of (a) Mutur's Abdul Majeed, (b) Kattankudi's Ahmed Lebbe, (c) Pandiruppu's Vel Murugu is presumed to be the work of (a) Homeguards, (b) Muslim armed group, (c) armed Tamil group other than the LTTE respectively.

● Chasing Prabakaran

'Curiouser and curiouser' the ungrammatical yet quaint phrase from 'Alice in Wonderland' appropriately describes the grand manhunt launched by the Indian Army in search of that elusive Tiger leader Velupillai Prabakaran.

In the good old days of Sri Lankan Army-LTTE clashes Sri Lankans were regaled with 'media-centred tales' of Prabakaran's movements. Seen here, there, everywhere; captured here, wounded there, 'killed' everywhere. Fortified with past experience Sri Lankans react with a casual response to Indian spokespersons, Indian-inspired leaks and Indian newspaper scoops about the adventures of the elusive Tiger.

Holed up in Kokuvil was the first, trapped in Kopay was next. Then he was injured in Chavakachcheri from where he hobbled on one foot to the base hospital in Manthikai, Puloly. He was sighted limping yet he was not captured or killed. A red herring then swam all the way across the Palk Straits. The search was on in Vedaranyam and Rameshwaram. The Tiger leader according to intelligence (Indian) reports found Jaffna made too hot for him and crossed over to India from where the Indian Army came.

The red herring swam back this time to the Islands off Jaffna. The next search was in Vadamaratchi.

The logic (Indian) was that the son of Vadamaratchi soil would prefer to die at the hands of the Indian Army on his native soil. Unfortunately VP did not want to die.

The scene then shifted to the East. Prabakaran could not cope with the superior Indian forces in the North, so he moves on to the East. The Tiger hunt is on, still Tiger No.one eludes his former friends and present foes.

In the meantime Prabakaran found time to send innumerable radio messages to his cadres in Madras, political leaders in India including Rajiv Gandhi. The IPKF was very skilful in 'intercepting' several messages between Prabakaran and his cadres here. Still no capture. While all this was going on Sri Lankans were told at different times that (1) Prabakaran was running from place to place followed closely by the Indian forces who were allowing him neither rest nor respite, (2) Prabakaran's hide-out, a luxurious bunker, has been discovered with couches to recline and television to watch (Rest and Recreation), (3) Prabakaran has surrounded himself with women and children. It was difficult to catch him because the Indian forces did not want to harm the civilians (nothing mentioned about civilian lives lost during Operation Pawan), (4) the Indian Army knows where Prabakaran is; it is only a matter of time before he is caught.

Adding to the confusion were the contradictory statements by Indian politicians, bureaucrats and reports in the Indian media. 'India wants him dead; India does not want him dead; India wants to capture him alive; India does not want to capture him because he would commit suicide, etc. were the confounding themes.

The situation however is now serious. Whatever the Indian political establishment may feel the military has scented blood. Three houses in Shastry Koolankulam in Vavuniya were bombed by helicopter upon receipt of information that Prabakaran was there.

So now the spotlight is on the Wanni. The natural habitat of the Tiger is the jungle. So the Wanni jungles are the 'happy hunting grounds'. Indran the God of the Devas has the 'Vajrayudha' as his weapon. 'Operation Vajra' (Cutting Edge) has been launched in the Wanni. Area of operations comprise the districts of Vavuniya, Mullaitivu, Kilinochchi and Trincomalee, 7,000 troops are in the jungles.

Again comes the confusion caused this time by contending political forces. Karunanidhi of the DMK says Tamils all over the world including Tamil Nadu are shocked that Indian soldiers were making efforts to capture Prabakaran dead or alive. 'The hands of the Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi will be stained forever with the blood of the Tamils by the efforts to liquidate the LTTE or Mr. Prabakaran who from the beginning had respect and confidence in India'. Tamil Nadu Congress Committee President Karuppiah Moopanar was quick to respond. 'It was not the intention of the Central Government to'kill' the LTTE leader Mr. V. Prabakaran', he said.

In such a situation one would like to conclude with an excerpt from Sukumar Ray, the Indian version of a Lews Carrol. Sukumar Ray whose centenary was last year is called the 'Nabab of Nonsense' and is well-known for his comic verse and fantasies. A passage from his fable 'HA-JA-BA-RA-LA' reads as follows.

'Who's cousin Treehopper?' I asked. 'Where does he live?'

'Up in the trees of course,' the cat replied.

'Where can I find him?' I asked again.

'Oh you can't do that,' he cried. 'Quite out of the question.'

'Why?' said I.

'It's like this you see,' said the cat.

Suppose you're looking for him at Vluberia: you'll hear he's in Motihari. So you go to Motihari only to find he's at Ramkrishnapur. Off you go again, but they tell you there he's left for Cossimbazzar. You just can't run him to earth.

Then how do you manage to meet him at all? I wondered.

(Courtesy of 'The Island')

'Protest Journey' to protect Tamils' rights

A contingent of political leaders, intellectuals, cine artistes and students began a 740-km 'Protest Journey' on March 26 from Madras to Kanyakumari, demanding protection of the rights of the Tamils in Sri Lanka and urging that the life of the LTTE leader, Mr. V. Prabakaran, be safeguarded.

The journey, which began in a convoy of cars and vans, was organised under the auspices of the Confederation for Protection of the Rights of Eelam Tamils. Led by Mr.V.C. Kuganathan, the journey was inaugurated by the DMK president, Mr.M. Karunanidhi, near the Periyar statue on Anna Salai.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Karunanidhi charged that a large number of Tamils were being killed in Sri Lanka daily without any let-up. A fight had been launched against the Tamil race on the island. The various political parties in the State had raised their protest, he said and hoped that the Central Government would pay heed to their feelings.

The participants raised slogans criticising the IPKF's 'hunt' for Mr. Prabakaran, and its role on the island. The participants passed through Tiruchi, Madurai and Tirumangalam before reaching their destination on March 29. Public meetings were held all along the route.

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AT THE HANDS OF THE IPKF

SAVAGERY BEYOND BELIEF

(The names of the eye witness, whose family was also attacked, and the names of all victims are left out for obvious reasons.)

'At about 7.30a.m. on 6.11.87 I heard shouts in a language foreign to me. A little while later, the windows of my house were smashed and shots were fired. I opened the door and about fifty Indian soldiers in uniform entered the house and one of them hit me with the rifle butt on my shoulder and kept the barrel on to my ear and threatened to shoot me to death. The Indian soldiers asked me, in colloquial English, whether we were supporters of the LTTE, I denied and said that our family had nothing to do with them. I also told them to take us into custody and inquire if they suspected us to be LTTE supporters. My whole family (self, son-in-law and two daughters) except the crippled son, were ordered to go to the sea-beach. My crippled son who is also an imbecile, was pushed down to the ground and trampled by the soldiers.

'Having led us to the sea-beach, a soldier ordered us to lie down and we did so. A fair-complexioned young officer said something in Hindi and immediately a soldier shot my son-in-law, (P). Thereafter, we were brought to our house and the soldiers demanded that we take out the cash and jewellery. I said that we did not have any. They ransacked the house and searched the trunks and suitcases. A little later we were again led to the sea-beach and were ordered to lie down. There I saw our neighbour, T's wife and children standing. They were crying loudly and I saw T's body lying on the ground. T must have been shot a few minutes earlier as his body was still twitching. At this stage, my daughters, (J and V) were stripped naked below the waist by a soldier. They were both crying and pleading for mercy. My daughter, (J), was ordered to lie down and hug her husband's body which she did. One soldier separated her legs and shot her through her private part, keeping the barrel of the rifle between the thighs. My other daughter, (V), who rolled towards her sister and hugged her was also shot by the same soldier, in the same manner, between the legs. I saw T's wife, (S) standing with her infant child sucking her breast and her three children by her side. An army man went up to her and shot at her twice. She fell down dead and the child fell down unhurt and was standing in the water, crying. When my daughters were shot, their blood splashed on me and my upper garments were wet with blood. I watched the brutal acts of the Indian soldiers while lying on the sea-beach. I pretended to be dead, moving my head to and fro, whenever the waves passed over me. From the corners of my eyes, I saw T's children being ordered to lie down. They were lying beside me and were crying. The army men went towards the houses and came back with paper bags full of some things. I closed my eyes and pretended to be dead. Someone shouted some words in Hindi and an army man shot the two daughters of T, (S and S) between their legs, in the same manner as he did to the other girls. Thereafter, I heard three other shots and heard the moans of the two little boys (K and T)., sons of T and realised that they were dying. The crying of the child stopped and I thought that child too had died instantly. After the army men left, I raised my head a little and found that all persons who were shot were dead.'

The parents and five children of the (T) family and three members of the eyewitness' family were killed in the above stated manner. Senior IPKF officers who try to fraternise with civilians, when told of atrocities by the IPKF, have said that their men did such acts to avenge the loss of their comrades.

Prof. Maurice Jones on the ethnic conflict

'But that is by no means the only problem. Leaving aside serious economic difficulties, it has to be said that Sri Lanka is no longer a thriving democracy. The political process virtually came to an end a decade ago with the concentration of power under the new constitution in an executive presidency at the expense of parliament, judiciary and elective participation. If violence now stalks the land, is it not in part because the channels of open, free democratic politics have been for so long blocked?' asked Professor Wyeth Maurice Jones, an international authority on ethnic relations.

'But even if Sinhalese/Tamil relations were the only problem, it cannot be spoken of as something the island has always endured. The two people lived side-by-side for several centuries, not by ignoring each other but actually by interacting amicably. Communal tension came as a by-product of social change in a previously very stable society. Ceylon entered independence as a cosy, almost cacooned little world led by a westernized, well-educated elite of high social status for whom English was almost their mother tongue. Both Tamils and Sinhalese belonged to this elite; and probably saw less distance between each other than between them and ordinary folk, who accepted the gulf. It was a placid society; and independence had come not as the result of a loud nationalist movement stirring the people to rise against the British, but rather through gentlemanly negotiations at the top.

So nationalism came to Ceylon; not before but after independence — and it came as Sinhalese nationalism. The easiest way of challenging the westernized alliance of elite Tamils and elite Sinhalese was to appeal in the name of defence of buddhism and advancement of the Sinhala language. The appeal was heard by the now awakened Sinhala educated middle-class which saw their rise impeded by a non-communal elite. Thus social aspirations were converted into communal hostility.

From then on each single Sinhalese Party, when in power has tried cautiously to reach deals with the Tamil leadership; and each, when out of power, has stoked up anti-Tamil sentiment to prevent any durable agreement. The Tamils in response moved at each stage further away from moderation towards more vigorous defence of Tamil interests.

If part of the trouble has been that rising social expectations have been too easily exploited in communal terms, the very high levels of mutual distrust and hatred probably owe much to Sri Lanka's smallness especially alongside India's giant size. This has created a deep sense of vulnerability, even on the part of the majority community. But not every Sinhalese, not every Tamil, in Sri Lanka has lost objectivity, even in the terrible times through which the island has been passing. It is around such pockets of sanity, but by re-examining the past forty years, that it may still be possible to find ways out of violence and despair.' — *B.B.C.*

Commentary on Independence Day Feb.4

IPKF Major caught with Gold!

A Major of the IPKF in Sri Lanka arriving on leave at Chandigarh airport in Punjab was nabbed by Police. He was found to be carrying 100 sovereigns of gold in broken pieces of jewellery. His explanation was that he bought the jewellery. Police believe he snatched it from Lankan Tamils. The Major had earlier flown from Lanka via Madras.

reported in 'THE ISLAND', Colombo, of 22.2.88

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READERS FORUM

DUBIOUS PROPOSITIONS

I did appreciate the two pieces in the April '87 issue of Tamil Times one by Mr. Ed Benedict (p.6) and the other by Mr. A.J. Wilson (pp.12-13). Mr. Benedict convincingly argues why the Tamil Boys who are freedom-fighters should not be too glibly described as terrorists, communists or separatists. Mr. Wilson shows the wise alternatives open to the Sri Lankan Government to resolve the ethnic crisis.

While agreeing fully with most of the points made, I have serious reservations about how both authors try to make Sri Lankan Tamils attractive to the West and to the U.S. regime, and how both take their distance from leftist politics.

The fact that the Tamils are naturally conservative, individualist and family-oriented does not mean that they have to remain closed to liberal, community-oriented socialist options. If they have not been as left-oriented as some of our Sinhalese brethren, it is not necessarily a quality; nor should that fact be used as Benedict tries to — to make the Tamils' cause attractive to U.S. public opinion. It can be counter-productive.

Mr. Benedict writes: 'It is against the very ethos of the Tamil people to be communists.' Now, that is an over-statement. It is not against the Tamil ethos to grow into a more leftist, socialist frame of mind. In fact, some of the new groups fighting for liberation, independence and self-respect seem to find inspiration in the life and work of great Asians like Mahatma Gandhi, Indira Gandhi, Mao Tse-Tung and Ho Chi Minh, who all knew how to take their distance from certain capitalist and nationalist ideologies. So, let us not for the sake of convenience and Western acceptability think that the Tamils are better than the Sinhalese because the leftist movements made no serious inroads in the Tamil homelands. It is not necessarily a plus. It just shows how conservative, insular and fenced-in most Sri Lankan Tamils have been. No wonder, communal politics became an attraction.

In fact, in spite of their occasional opportunist betrayals, the leftists in the South (much more than even the religious organisations) seem to be the only voice of sanity for a just settlement in Sri Lanka. Thus, it is unwise to try to buy U.S. support by portraying the Tamils as individualist, capitalist, and family-oriented. If that is true, then it is time they become more community-oriented, socialist and left-leaning too, as most of the revolutionary groups happen to be. We can learn from our Sinhala brethren in the South.

The same argument used to be made about China, India and Indo-china. And these conservative lands, without losing their traditional values have all become left-leaning too.

As for Mr. Wilson, true, he was speaking to the U.S. sub-committee on Asian and Pacific Affairs; but we do not have to bend over backwards to show our closeness to U.S. ideology as compared with the leftist outlook. I agree with most of Dr. Wilson's fine analysis of the situation, and the wise alternatives he proposes. What seems totally exaggerated and unacceptable is when he says: 'There has been a long tradition of education through American mission in the Tamil unit. The Tamil people feel morally obliged to the U.S. institutions which spent so much time over their education. Any agreement therefore with the U.S. Government will be honoured.' First, it is not historically true. Though the American *Christian* Mission made a significant contribution to education in the North, one should not canonize it the way he does. There were many other more significant ways in which education took place for the Tamils both in the North and in the rest of Sri Lanka.

What I find particularly distasteful is the type of conclusion he draws from this dubious proposition. He says that the Tamils will be more accomodating of U.S. interests (broadcasting facilities and the like) than the Sinhalese. In this he fails compoletely to see the wisdom of Sri Lankan policy towards capitalist and imperialist interests. This is another area where the Tamils can be open to learning from the Sinhalese. Sri Lankans under the Bandaranayakes and the Senanayakes because of the influence of great leftist leaders like Colvin, N.M. Perera, Philip Gunawardene, Bernard Soysa and many others, did wisely change their tactics in relation to whatever agreements they had with the West. Thus it is rather unwise to fail to admire the foreign policy of the successive Sri Lankan governments, and even their openness to the Left, specially under the SLFP. JR's unprincipled antics of the last few years should not make us oblivious of Sri Lanka's bold and enlightened stand on foreign affairs.

Tamils do not need to pose as pro-American or anti-left in order to fight for self-determination and basic human rights. Nor should we disown Sri Lankan foreign policy of the last few decades which rightly fought colonialism, feudalism and imperialism.

To conclude: the Tamils' individualism — even if it be true — is not a virtue that should exclude a healthy democratic socialism. The Tamils' purported education by American missionaries (which may have affected a small minority) cannot be construed as making the Tamils more reliable partners in agreements with the West or the U.S. The Sinhalese have qualities which we have to acknowledge, and even learn from; and our dubious 'virtues' should not be exploited in our dialogue with the West or the U.S.

While we deplore Sinhala Buddhist extremism, nationalism and chauvinism, let us not fail to appreciate the qualities and achievements of the Sinhala nation as a whole. Honesty is the best policy, even if it may not be the best politics in certain situations.

Fr. C.A. Joachim Pillai

2661, Kingston Road,
Scarborough, ONT.
Canada M1M 1M3.

How do we Proceed?

Your February issue of the Tamil Times asked the question: Where do we go from here? We have to proceed, avoiding violence and preventing its escalation.

One gets the feeling that too much attention is being devoted to considering the nature of the destination, and less about how to get there. This was the mistake that befell the Indian attempt to implement the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement of July 29th.

But this does not mean that we should not carefully consider our goals in a broader perspective. There are those who feel tired of the journey so far undertaken, and wish to accept the terms of the agreement, purely because they are tired. This is not convincing enough. There are considerations in a broader perspective which augment the conclusion, that we should proceed to the agreement.

Fundamentally what do the Tamils in Sri Lanka seek? They seek that degree of freedom that the Sinhalese enjoy. The Tamils are not as big as the Sinhalese in numbers, but they do not wish to be under greater constraints on their freedom to live and progress in accordance with their ability.

Some degree of disadvantage to minorities is evident in very many states throughout the world, at the present time. In all these cases there are varying degrees of protest and revolt. Even in the reputedly quiet USSR there has arisen the Armenian uprising. But neither any state nor the United Nations has produced a solution that can be generally applied. Demands for separate states continue to increase.

At the same time there are areas of the world where a tendency is arising, for separate states to merge together. The Scandinavian countries have had a great degree of co-operation among themselves for a long time. The countries of the European Economic Community are diligently continuing their efforts to bring their governments to coalesce. The reasons for these countries to pursue this trend are dictated by modern technology. For survival they find they have to join together.

These are generally between neighbouring countries. In those regions of the world which have recently gained independence the neighbours start fighting. Among the countries who

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have been independent for a long time, and have fought many wars in the past, the tendency is to foster closer ties. Let us follow the example of the more advanced countries and foster closer ties among neighbours.

In all these geography plays a very important part. It influences territorial, commercial, and cultural interests, with historical overtones added. We cannot change the land, the river basins, and the seas. These determine who our neighbours are. The closest to what is being called Elam, is South Sri-Lanka which is peopled by Sinhalese. Next comes Tamil Nadu, and thereafter the whole of India and South Asia.

Taking these and many other factors into consideration one is driven to the conclusion that the next step should be to work to reach the political terms of the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement.

This has become very difficult owing to the growth of violence during the last decade. Fortunately there is an endeavour on the part of India to settle this conflict. The presence of the Indian army can provide the breathing space to work constructively.

We should reach the stage for political decisions by creating the correct climate of public opinion. For this the people should be back in their homes and free to discuss and express their opinion. We should work in the faith that the mind of the people freely expressed, after adequate discussion is the best guide for the future course of progress.

For the above purpose the following steps have to be taken:

1. Establish full media coverage, that is free, unfettered, and either non partisan or better still all-partisan.
2. Give protection and enable all refugees to get back to their homes.

In order to determine who the genuine old inhabitants are, a commission composed of representatives of Tamils, Sinhalese, and Indian government, should be set up. Their decisions will guide the authorities in settling the people. This should bring back Tamils, Sinhalese, Muslims, and the floating population like the fishermen, to their habitats.

3. Aid from all acceptable sources should be used to finance the media set up, and in housing aid to returning refugees. Coupled with these should proceed the restoration of infrastructures of communications, medical facilities, schools, etc.
4. All those detained as militants or suspected militants should be released. They should be followed through to their return to their habitats, given short training, and fixed in an occupation. They would then be involved in the reconstruction work which will be available in plenty. The same would apply to all militants who wish to enter this Elam service. They should be suitably orientated, and instructed on social engineering, to divert their energy into constructive channels. This aspect is important to eliminate violence. For even if a political settlement were implemented and accepted, unless the militants are otherwise engaged, the violence in the country will emerge in other forms.

All these will take time and patience and will cost much. But it will be worth it. Not to face the task now, and allow the violence to continue, will mean situations as in Ireland and Palestine. One can see that things only get worse. So let us all divert our energies, all of Sri Lanka, all of India, and our friends throughout the world.

The returning Sri Lankans will themselves form an effective force to turn the course of the country. The authorities of India will not grudge their contribution, as it will ensure the peace of the South of their domain. There are many agencies in the world who will be happy to assist in such a bright venture. The world faces a proliferation of non-nuclear violence. So an attempt to reverse the process even in a small area as in Sri Lanka will be encouraged by many.

S. Rajan
Adelaide,
Australia

EELANADU

Many established institutions in the Tamil areas have been destroyed or damaged during the past several years. 'EELANADU' survived the violence and trauma of these years and was one of the institutions about which the Tamil people could and should have been proud of. It had been the target of the Sri Lankan police and army, indeed the government too, but its publication never ceased.

The senseless destruction of 'EELANADU' and its cessation of publication will go down in the history of the Tamil people as one of its worst tragedies.

S. Nadarajah

Colombo 12,
Sri Lanka.

TAMIL DOCTORS & MEDICAL FACULTY

It is ironic that on the same page of Tamil Times (page 25, March '88), two stories appeared — one about the threatened closure of the Jaffna Medical Faculty and shortage of medical staff in all fields at the Jaffna General Hospital; and the other about Tamil doctors in the UK forming a new organisation to enhance and entrench their already well established positions.

Doctors and other professionals who had gone abroad on scholarships or those who went on holiday have not returned to their posts. Some of them abandoned their posts due to the violence and the insecurity they had to face in the Tamil areas and have gone abroad. Most of these people are unlikely to return until normalcy and peace return. Even then, some may not return for they have been able to obtain jobs with better salaries. Even those who are left behind are trying to get out. If they fail in their attempt to go abroad, they are moving to south Sri Lanka from where they fled in fear after July 1983.

Years of conflict have not only resulted in the death of thousands and destruction of more homes, but also has severely affected the entire infrastructure — social, economic, educational and cultural — of the Tamil community. Appeals through the columns of Tamil Times which is essentially read by expatriate Tamils who cry for the continuation of the 'struggle' from the security of the life of luxury they lead will be pointless until peace and normalcy return to the troubled Tamil areas.

A suffering Tamil

Jaffna,
Sri Lanka.

(Contd. on page 21)

SRI LANKA ARMY VACATES POINT PEDRO

The Sri Lankan army hitherto stationed at Point Pedro vacated the camp on 27 March in 34 vehicles escorted by the IPKF.

Arrangements are being made to reopen Hartley College and the Methodist Girls College which were closed down for the past three years due to the fact that they were situated within 'Prohibited Zones' and in the vicinity of the army camp. The Point Pedro Courts are also likely to be renovated with a view to reopening.

Meanwhile, the Thondamanar Selvachannathi Murugan Hindu temple declared out of bounds to devotees for the last three years was now returning to normal. Recently, a Kumbabishekam ceremony was held at this temple.

BULLET-PROOF CARS FOR PRESIDENTIAL SECURITY

Two custom made bullet-proof Benz Cars have been imported recently by the government of Sri Lanka to enhance security for the island's President.

The Benz cars, after their windscreens and the windows were tinted at the local agents of the Benz company in Colombo, were delivered at the President's House on 23 March. The two cars are estimated to have cost the government Rs.14 million.

The two cars have been purchased to supplement the fleet of presidential cars as a security measure.

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WORLD HINDU CONFERENCE

KATHMANDU, March 25 — In a colourful ceremony amidst the chantings of Vedic, Buddhist, Jain and Sikh sutras, King Birendra of Nepal formally inaugurated the five-day second world Hindu conference at Kathmandu's Dashrath Stadium today.

The Sankaracharyas — Swami Swaroopananda Saraswathi of the Dwaraka Peetam and Swami Jayendra Saraswati of the Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam; the Jain Muni, Sri Sushil Kumar, Bhikshu Amritananda and Sirdar Jagir Singh and Nepal's royal preceptor offered them blessings.

In his inaugural address King Birendra said Nepal had known since the Vedic times as the abode of Lord Shiva and Parvati. 'It the sacred stone, Saligrama, found in Nepal is revered as an incarnation of Lord Vishnu. Rudraksha that consecrates our beads is still sought after in the forests of Nepal,' he added.

The King noted that it was in Nepal where Sri Sita was born so was the apostle of peace, the Buddha and it was here that the great sage Valmiki had lived the life of a recluse. Highlighting Nepal's efforts in conserving its religio-cultural heritage the King referred to the Mahendra Sanskrit University founded last year to promote the teaching and research in Hindu religion and philosophy along with Sanskrit language and literature.

Noting that the time had come for all Hindus to join hands and move ahead with respect and tolerance for each other's belief, the King said the theme 'Hindu unity for world peace' chosen by the conference had made the meet more appropriate and relevant.

On the occasion Sri Jayendra Saraswati conferred the title of 'Hindu Dharma Samrat' (Emperor of all people of Hindu faith) on King Birendra.

Eternal religion: In his blessing note to the conference the Kanchi Acharya said Hinduism was as eternal as were the sun and moon and extolled Nepal's national flag which resembled a 'Dharmapataka'.

The general assembly decided to establish world Hindu centres and sub-centres in different parts of the world. In view of this, the delegates recommended an increase in the budget.

Re-elected president

Mr Nagendra Prasad Rijal, former Prime Minister of Nepal, has been unanimously re-elected president of the World Hindu Organisation (WHO) for the second term of five years.

This was announced at the general assembly of the World Hindu conference at the Royal Nepal Academy here by the election commission member and former Chief Justice of Nepal, Mr. Bhagvati Prasad Singh.

Book Review

FROM THE JEWS TO THE TAMILS

Britain's mistreatment of refugees

'This country has an obsession with immigration controls bordering on the pathological. Such controls have come like waves throughout this century. In the last few years they have come like tidal waves — to such an extent as to have made King Canute's historic task appear easy. The escalation of immigration restrictions within the last decade has undoubtedly been provoked by the Prime Minister's election speech in 1979 when she stated that the country was being "swamped by aliens".'

From the Jews to the Tamils examines within the context of increasing immigration restrictions the UK's denial of asylum to those seeking refugee status. It looks at the role of the press, of the courts and of parliament. It examines the practices of the Home Office and its immigration officers. In particular it describes the refusal of asylum to Tamil refugees and shows how 'the mistreatment of Tamils over the last 3 years has proved to be the catalyst in tightening not just the laws in respect to asylum but also in respect to immigration controls generally'.

From the Jews to the Tamils also exposes a myth. The myth is that Britain has traditionally been a haven for those fleeing oppression elsewhere. It shows that the reverse is the case — and that Britain has behaved oppressively towards those seeking asylum. It explains how Jewish refugees in particular have throughout this century been denied entry. The first ever immigration legislation, the Aliens Act of 1905, was designed specifically to keep out Jews fleeing anti-semitism in Russia and Eastern Europe. Again immigration controls were used to deny entry to an untold number of Jews seeking to escape Nazism in the 1930s. Those few who did get into the country were put in internment camps. **From the Jews to the Tamils** reveals all this hidden history and raises the question as to why the history has been hidden and distorted.

This book is available by mail order, price £2 including post and packing. Cheques should be made payable to

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CINEMA

'Raasaavae Unnai Nambi'

Next time Radharavi sees a military uniform in the costume section, he will definitely throw a fit. He must have been tired of playing the military man and that too suspecting the fidelity of his newly married wife. Red Sun Art Creation's 'Raasavae Unnae Nambi' follows such a story line, the differences being that the man suspected to be the cause for the wife's condition is his adopted brother. The tension and pity this particular scene is supposed to evoke is lost with the placid face of the hero, Ramarajan. Uniformity is something Ramarajan believes in and his countenance is a fine example. The director T.K. Bose even has him murdered in the end, just for a variation, before the military man learns the truth about his potency from the doctor (Poornam Viswanathan) — that is another tale of cinematic sacrifice, if one is still interested in staying on.

Every fourth minute Rekha vows to marry her man (Ramarajan) but her family connections with an undesirable father (Malaysia Vasudevan) at the helm, make the hero reluctant to nod his head. An element of surprise is ushered in when Ilavarasan (not a bad job by this youngster) makes his appearance threatening the military man's wife with exposure of her past. This mystery is short-lived as the director, unable to extricate himself, takes the easiest way out.

Saritha, Rekha and Radharavi just go through the motions as if on remote control. The mole hunt seems to have caught up with our producers and in this movie S.S. Chandran, Senthil are at it with Usilai Mani holding the key to their problem. Of the seven songs by Ilayaraja, 'Rasaathi manasilae' takes the top slot.

Refugee movement in Tamil Nadu

By end-March, 6,600 camp refugees had been sent back to Sri Lanka, practically all of whom are residents of Mannar. They were sent in batches of 500 ever since the refugee return was initiated in December 1987. But there are still 18,000 refugees in camps in Tamil Nadu, a large number of whom are reluctant to get back, particularly those from Trincomalee, Vavuniya and Mullaitivu districts.

Besides the remaining 18,000 in the camps, there are, according to Indian Government authorities 1,25,000 Sri Lankan Tamils living outside the camps who are self-supporting and are no burden to the Indian government. The Indian Government's announcement that all these Tamils should register and arm themselves with Refugee Registration cards has met with poor response despite the extension of the deadline from December 31, 1987 to February 29, 1988. Visas have not been extended beyond last December except to students.

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INDIAN OPPOSITION PARTIES CALL FOR CEASEFIRE

Eleven opposition Members of Parliament said prolonging the Indian Peace-Keeping Force's offensive against Tamil rebels would not improve the situation in Sri Lanka and demanded an immediate ceasefire.

In a statement in Delhi, they said any future political settlement would be jeopardised if Sri Lankan forces were allowed into Tamil areas on any pretext.

They said the Indian Government should act immediately to prevent the Sri Lankan forces from entering the Tamil areas and resume negotiations with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) to bring peace to Sri Lanka.

It was 'unfortunate that the Sri Lankan Government had sent its forces to the eastern province' while LTTE leader V. Prabhakaran had come forward with a proposal for unconditional talks with the Indian Government, they said.

The statement said, 'under the pretext of the so-called guerilla war by the LTTE,' the Sri Lankan government was 'reluctant' to implement the main demands of the merger of the northern and eastern provinces as one unit and devolution of power to the provincial council before elections.

The signatories to the statement were M.S.Gurupadaswamy, Madhu Dandavate and Thampan Thomas of the Janata Party, P.Upendra of the Telugu Desam, Aladi Aruna and K.R.Natarajan of the *Janaki* faction of the AIADMK, V.Gopalasamy and N.V.N. Somu of the DMK, L.K.Advani of the BJP, V. Kishore Deo of the Congress-S and Lt.General (Retd) Jagjit Singh Aurora of the Akali Dal (L).

THE NADESAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. S. Nadesan Q.C. who was enrolled as an advocate of the Supreme Court on 7 October 1931 and who died on 21 December last year was a fearless and dedicated champion of human rights and civil liberties throughout his long and distinguished legal career. He was elected President of the Bar Council in 1970. Mr. Nadesan campaigned ceaselessly for the legal rights of individuals and groups in the Senate of which he was a member almost continuously from its inception in 1947 until its abolition in 1972. He was a founder member of the Civil Rights Movement in 1971 and remained its driving force until the day of his death at the age of 83.

THE NADESAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS THROUGH LAW has been set up to perpetuate his memory. It will be primarily a governmental organisation and individuals active in human rights work. The constitution of THE NADESAN CENTRE specifically provides that it will 'seek to complement rather than duplicate the efforts of others active in the field of human rights, and to this end shall place emphasis on providing a service for lawyers and organisations engaged in the pursuit of legal remedies for human rights violations with a view to making their work more effective.'

The initial projects of the Nadesan Centre will be the establishment of a human rights law library and the provision of a consultative and advisory service for lawyers engaged in human rights cases.

There have been remarkable developments in international human rights law, and the creation of a body of jurisprudence in this field. Lawyers engaged in such work in Sri Lanka have experienced difficulties in gaining access to this body of law in respect of the decisions of international bodies, regional tribunals and decisions of national courts in other countries. The library will meet this need.

In providing a consultative and advisory service to lawyers working in the field of human rights the Centre will aim at strengthening their work and making it more effective by minimising duplication and dilution of effort.

THE NADESAN CENTRE, an independent and non-political institution, also aims to provide a forum for scholarly discussion, to engage in research and bring out publications on selected topics, to examine violations of human rights and provide legal representation in selected cases, to liaise with similar organisations elsewhere and to promote public education in human rights.

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10 INJURED IN BOMB ATTACK

While the Matara Urban Council was holding its monthly meeting on March 20, at about 11.25a.m. two youths rushed into the Council premises and hurled three bombs that they had brought with them in a brown-paper bag into the meeting.

Two of the bombs exploded while the third, which has been recovered, failed to do so.

Ten persons, including seven members of the Council were injured in this attack and had to be rushed to the Matara hospital for treatment.

Two of the Councillors were representatives of the C.P.S.L. They are B.Y. Tudawe, former Deputy Minister of Education and Leader of the Opposition in the Matara U.C., and Chandrasiri Gajadeera, President of the Communist Youth Federation of Sri Lanka, member of the Party's Central Committee, and an attorney at law. The third Communist Councillor, Kithsiri Wijesooriya, was slightly injured.

Four U.N.P. Councillors, including the Deputy Chairman who was presiding were also injured.

The only SLFP Councillor Tudor Gunasekera did not attend the U.C. meeting that day.

FIVE MORE

5 employees of the Council were also injured. They include the Electrical Engineer, the P.H.I. and three other employees.

The attackers, who took to their heels after flinging the bombs, are said to be from the J.V.P. Their appearance has been described by some persons who witnessed the incident.

Communist leader B.Y. Tudawe was the object of an earlier J.V.P. terrorist attack last year, when a J.V.P. gunman shot him in the back through the window of his house while he was watching television.

On that occasion he was hospitalised for several weeks and had to undergo several operations. On this occasion, too, he had to undergo surgery to remove shrapnel.

The Matara U.C., which is UNP-dominated, did not apparently have Police or army personnel guarding it. The only security provided was by five security guards of the U.C. itself.

MARTIN ENNALS

Mr.Martin Ennals, Secretary General of 'International Alert' was refused entry into Sri Lanka when he was turned back at the Katunayake (Colombo) airport on 9th March. He was on a fact-finding mission into alleged IPKF atrocities in the North and Human Rights violations in the South.

'International Alert' was founded in 1985 to focus attention on problems of group conflict which violate human rights and work towards viable peaceful solutions.

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PEACE IN JAFFNA 'A LONG WAY OFF'

Jaffna, April 1: A top official of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) has indicated that peace and normalcy in Sri Lanka's war-torn Jaffna peninsula may still be a long way off because, though weakened, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) is not 'down and out yet'.

'The peace which has descended on the peninsula is apparent, but we do not deceive ourselves into thinking that we have brought the situation under complete control,' Maj. Gen. Sardesh Pande, General Officer Commanding in Chief of the IPKF, told UNI in an interview at his Palaly headquarters, 20 km north of here, on Wednesday.

He said there were no signs of the LTTE running out of weapons. 'Either they have a large number of weapons hidden away or they are getting fresh supplies. So we have to continue to recover them.' Gen. Pande, who took charge of the IPKF operations in the peninsula in January said.

Gen. Pande dismissed the LTTE's overtures for a ceasefire as 'unreasonable, clever and manipulated'.

'You stop firing and we will stop firing,' he said and pointed out that the LTTE had, so far, not shown any inclination for a ceasefire.

Gen. Pande said the LTTE had, in fact, distanced itself from a ceasefire by continuing its attacks on the IPKF. 'Everyday they are blowing up vehicles, throwing grenades and killing innocent people. What credibility do they have?'

He said LTTE leader Prabhakaran was waging a 'full-fledged war' against the IPKF which showed no sign of ending as far as the group was concerned. 'The only thing the LTTE believes in is the gun and its power. So they simply can't afford to think of laying down the weapon. That will be their end.'

Million dollar question: Though the IPKF had established military control over the peninsula, when normalcy would be restored was a 'million dollar question', Gen Pande said. Normalisation of the situation would depend on the people's willingness to assert themselves and convince the militants that 'violence is no longer necessary'.

Public opinion, which was now 'prostrate on the ground', would have to stand up. 'It will take some time for us to give it that confidence.'

He said that with both the political and militant leadership having disappeared from the peninsula, the atmosphere was now characterised by 'substantive fear' on the part of the civilian population. The fear was 'total' some months ago.

Gen. Pande said that Jaffna peninsula, which was the stronghold of the LTTE would continue to be so because '90 per cent' of the population was 'pro-LTTE'.

'If the people were not pro-LTTE there would be something wrong with them' because the group was a 'social projection' of the accumulated grievances of the island's minority Tamil community for the past 40 years. 'The LTTE had fought for their honour and safety and it is part and parcel of the society,' Gen. Pande said.

The response the civilians had given the IPKF was 'tremendous' and the common man was genuinely interested in peace. The people now realised why the IPKF was here and 'seen us paying the price'. Of late, they had positively started helping the IPKF, he added.

'What they can't stomach is that we have suddenly entered into a conflict with the LTTE.'

Asked why the IPKF went into conflict if it felt that the LTTE enjoyed popular support, Gen. Pande countered: 'Why don't you ask this question to the political leaders and top military officials?'

Biggest impediment: Gen. Pande said the biggest impediment to peace in the peninsula was the 'total distrust' the people showed towards everything. 'The people have lost all faith in everybody. They feel that they are being taken for a ride. They think that we are playing the Sri Lankan game. They think that we are not clever enough to see it through.'

One of the constant refrains was that the IPKF was here to protect its strategic interests and that it was keen to gain control of Trincomalee harbour. 'We have better places in India from where we can protect our strategic interests,' he said.

In this background, it would be very difficult to fix a time-frame to overcome the 'deep-seated distrust' of the people to restore peace.

Gen. Pande said the IPKF was in the peninsula only to control the situation and 'that has been achieved'. But militarily insurgency was a 'difficult proposition' to solve as history had shown in several countries. 'I am confident in my mind that at this rate 'with the application of military and persuasive force, it will be possible to restore peace and normalcy in the peninsula.'

Gen. Pande said the LTTE leadership had disappeared from the peninsula because, confident of the support of the people, they did not want to 'waste their efforts here'.

'We feel that they still retain their hold on Jaffna. Our aim is to loosen their grip,' he added.

Gen. Pande said that with the IPKF relaxing movement of people in and out of the peninsula, some LTTE men had started coming back. The geography of the peninsula was such that it was impossible to stop the movement of the militants. 'The lagoons are not even porous, they are like bottomless sieves. Anyone can wade across these lagoons or move in a fishing boat.'

Asked about allegations by the LTTE that the IPKF was using members of the rival militant groups to spot their men, Gen. Pande said that anybody who helped the IPKF fight the war would be given 'a sympathetic hearing'. Many had come to the IPKF because the LTTE had threatened them.

He said the hatred between the other groups and the LTTE had reached such levels that it was going to be their (LTTE's) weakest point in the days to come.

(Courtesy of The Hindu)

GOVERNMENT EMBARRASSED

The frank views expressed by the General have caused tremendous embarassment among official circles in New Delhi. An official spokesman reacting quickly to the UNI report, said General Sardesh Pande's remarks have been 'reported completely out of context'. The spokesman said the position had been checked with the officer and he had confirmed that he had been misquoted.

It will be remembered that Gen. Pande's predecessor, Maj. Gen. Harkirat Singh was earlier recalled home because it was believed that he was 'soft' on the LTTE.

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INDIAN NUCLEAR BOMB, A CANARD

The Indian Ambassador to the United States, P.K.Kaul, has dismissed as 'a figment of the imagination' a United Press International news agency report that India possessed 20 or more nuclear bombs.

The report, quoting US intelligence sources, former National Security Council members and Congressional staffers, said last Sunday that India had assembled a handful of 'highly sophisticated low-yield atomic bombs' that can be delivered to targets by combat aircraft.

'It is a figment of their imagination taking different peaceful and scientific programmes out of context,' Mr. Kaul told Press Trust of India.

According to observers in Washington, this was a deliberate canard designed to help Pakistan get further aid from Washington despite its own clandestine nuclear programme.

The observers pointed out at the moment there was a special urgency in playing up the so-called Indian nuclear threat to Pakistan.

Pakistan has employed a former Foreign Relations Committee staffer as its highly paid lobbyist. It is not known whether he was among those anonymous ex-staffers interviewed by the wire service.

Islamabad is now trying very hard to ensure that there would be no slowdown in US aid to Pakistan, despite an Afghan peace settlement.

The World Bank had made its future aid commitments to Pakistan conditional on a reduction of the country's defence expenditure in real terms over the next five years. The observers said it had become essential for Pakistan to prove that it could not relax on the defence front.

ASIAN TEACHER 'VICTIM OF DISCRIMINATION'

The City of Bradford Metropolitan Council was found by the Leeds Industrial Tribunal to have discriminated unlawfully against Miss Ranjit Arora on the grounds of her race and her sex. In a unanimous decision the Tribunal awarded her £500 compensation for injury to feelings and costs against the Council.

Miss Arora has been Head of Multicultural Education at the Bradford and Ilkley College since 1983. In April 1987 she applied for the post of Head of Teaching Studies. She was invited to the first interview but not selected for the second. The Industrial Tribunal found that the interviews were not conducted within the recommendations of the Race Relations Code of Practice of the Commission for Racial Equality or Bradford City Council's own practice and procedures.

The appointment of the successful 'white male candidate was a self-fulfilling prophecy', CRE stated.

Miss Arora wrote to the College authorities querying why she had not been sent to the second stage of interview. The Tribunal were satisfied that the College's reply was not an honest attempt to tell her the reason why she was not taken on to the second interview.

Miss Arora was provided with legal representation by CRE.

LIBERAL HEAD REFUSED ENTRY

The Executive Vice President of Liberal International, Mr. Urs Schoettli, has been refused an entry visa to Sri Lanka. No reasons have been given by the government for rejecting his application.

Mr. Schoettli is the Executive head of Liberal International which is a world union of fifty Liberal parties from around the globe.

Among its leading members are the Liberal Party of Canada, the Democratic Party of the United States, Union for French Democracy of France and the Free Democratic Party of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Mr. Schoettli was to address a seminar organised by the Council for Liberal Democracy in April on the topic 'The Presidency and the Institutional form of the Sri Lankan State'. He was also expected to discuss the monitoring of

SUSPECT DIES IN POLICE CUSTODY

One of the two suspects taken into custody by the police in connection with the murder of Vijaya Kumaranatunga, the leader of the SLMP, died while in custody. Police sources claimed that he died of pneumonia.

The deceased who is identified as Saparamadu, a Sinhala youth in his early twenties, was taken into police custody from Nugegoda about ten days previously. The police, however, refused to disclose the date on which Saparamadu died.

According to police sources, Saparamadu had ridden the motor cycle on

REFUGEES HIT BY SOCIAL SECURITY CHANGES

Refugees and people seeking asylum in UK will be particularly badly hit when changes in the social security system come into force on 11 April.

Asylum-seekers will be most affected. Many are forced to rely on Income Support as they have no money and are initially not allowed to work. Yet they will receive only 90 per cent of the normal rate of Income Support.

'We don't accept that people seeking asylum should receive less than others,' says Nick Scott-Flynn, welfare rights worker at the British Refugee Council, 'The DHSS seems to have created another complication for themselves that will cause real hardship for this small group of claimants.' BRC estimates that about 2,000 new claims are made every year by asylum-seekers.

The new Social Fund will also cause hardship. BRC is worried that asylum-seekers' genuine needs may not be met. Many refugees arrive with just the clothes they stand up in. They could previously claim single payment grants for such basic essentials as clothing and furniture. But the Social Fund offers no guaranteed support. Any money that is made available will mostly be in the form of loans. Paying back loans will be especially difficult for asylum-seekers on their reduced level of Income Support.

BRC is very worried that the changes will hamper the successful resettlement of refugees in Britain. 'The DHSS has departed from a long-standing commitment to meet the needs of refugees and asylum-seekers,' says Nick Scott-Flynn. 'We will be closely monitoring the new changes and if our fears are realised we hope the government will adjust the system.'

UNIVERSITIES TO REMAIN CLOSED

The Vice-Chancellors of the various universities in Sri Lanka who met on 25 March decided that there was no point in opening the universities in the present atmosphere with students demanding a general election and the release of students held in custody for alleged subversive activities.

The Vice-Chancellors would appear to have felt that there would certainly be an outbreak of violence and trouble if the universities were reopened in the prevailing atmosphere. They also entertained the fear that university property and other assets would be damaged in the event violence broke out following the reopening of the universities.

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INDIAN COMMUNITY SEEKS DISTINCT STATUS

Indians in Singapore want the government to accept them as a distinct minority group in any proposed constitutional reform, groups representing the Indian community told a parliamentary select committee.

The parliamentary committee is considering constitutional amendments to introduce 'team MP' legislation to institutionalise multi-racial politics in Singapore.

Under the proposed legislation, candidates in certain constituencies will be allowed to contest in teams of three, with one seat reserved for a racial minority.

Addressing the 13-member committee, the Prime Minister, Mr Lee Kuan Yew said Indians did not have any real problems making their way to the top of any field in Singapore. Mr Lee said the government specifically wanted to mention the Malays because there was a relatively small pool of qualified people among them.

On the other hand, the Prime Minister said, there was a huge reservoir of Chinese and a large proportion of Indian groups to be selected as candidates.

The president of the Tamil language and cultural society in Singapore, Mr. V.T. Arasu, told the committee that the proposal to acknowledge the community in a separate provision in the legislation would be the most effective way of ensuring multi-racial representation in Parliament.

He said there was considerable apprehension among the Indians, who are the third largest community after Chinese and Malays that they would be left out of the new legislation.

Indians who form seven per cent of Singapore's population of 26 lakhs have been historically accepted as a major community, he said.

The Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Goh Chok Tong, who sponsored the legislation assured the Indian groups that their views would be considered by the committee.

OIL AND GAS STRUCK AT NANNILAM

The Oil and Natural Gas Commission of India has discovered oil and gas at Nannilam, 12 km west of Tiruvarur town in Thanjavur district of Tamil Nadu. The well, drilled up to a depth of 3,460 metres, is yielding crude oil at the rate of 150 barrels a day and gas at 2,933 cubic metres a day.

Announcing this on March 23, the ONGC said this discovery was the fourth in the onland Cauvery Basin. The other three hydrocarbon strikes — at Kovilkalappal and Narimanam (both in Thanjavur district) and at Bhuvanagiri in South Arcot district — had been put on production. They together supplied 1,40,500 barrels of oil so far to the Madras Refineries.

The ONGC had started supplying gas to the steel rolling mills at Nagapattinam from the Narimanam wells. It was drawing up a plan to supply 40,000 cubic metres of gas a day to the Tamil Nadu Electricity Board for power generation at Kovilkalappal, while the TNEB was taking action to set up a five MW gas turbine unit. The ONGC had undertaken a market survey for the utilisation of associated/free gas that might be available by 1990 from the Cauvery Basin.

Sixtyone wells had been drilled so far in the Cauvery Basin (both onland and offshore). Fortytwo locations had been identified for drilling on the onland Cauvery Basin, out of which 15 were deep locations (over 3,500 metres).

INDIAN SATELLITE IN ORBIT

India's first indigenously produced satellite, IRS-1A, went into orbit on 17 March making India the fifth nation to have its own operational remote sensing satellite in space.

The Rs.650 million 975 kilogram satellite shot into space after a magnificent launch by the Soviet Vostok rocket from the Baikonaur cosmodrome.

The authorities said the spacecraft was circling the earth over the poles at a height of 904 kilometres, taking 103 minutes for each orbit.

The launch was witnessed by Professor U.R.Rao, Indian Space Commission Chairman, Dr.K.Kasturi Rangan, Project Director of the Indian Satellite Centre where the satellite was built and Indian Ambassador to Moscow T.N.Kaul.

For the Soviet Union, the launch was the first since its space business went commercial. India will pay Rs.75 million for the launch.

IRS-1A carries three linear imaging self scanning cameras that will take pictures of 148 kilometre wide scenes in four different colours with a spatial resolution of 38 and 76 metres, officials said.

The data will be received at the ground station near Hyderabad originally set up in 1979 to receive pictures fromthe American satellite Landsat.

AN APPEAL SKANDA VARODAYA COLLEGE

During the day and night curfew which started on 10 October 1987 and lasted without a break for six weeks, thousands of refugees from the vicinity took shelter in the College as the bombing and shelling continued unabated. When the army moved, all fled in the clothing they were standing in leaving behind their homes and valuables. No movement of people was permitted, all communications cut-off, no shops were open and there was no electricity. The refugees in the College had no food. If there was anything to cook, there was no firewood. In desperation, the people used the substantial part of the furniture of College as firewood. Vandalism reigned supreme. The lab was damaged. Not even a screw driver was left in the motor mechanism workshop or in the carpentry workshop.

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CHOLERA AND VENEREAL DISEASE

Cholera which is endemic in India has spread its tentacles to North Sri Lanka. At least 52 cases have been detected in Jaffna Town, Manipay, Kayts, Chavakachcheri and Kankesanturai. Nine have died of Cholera. The Government of Sri Lanka is concerned that it might

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READERS FORUM

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PLATITUDES IN A PREDICAMENT

The Tamil Community constrained to remain in Sri Lanka is on the horns of a vastly self consuming dilemma. The year just past has already seen the bloodiest and bitterest fighting in the North and East. Never before in recorded history has this area of the Tamil heartland, the North, ever been billetted and buffetted by the full fury of any Government, be it Sri Lankan or better. At the beginning of the year itself Sinhala frustration that had been bottled up ever after the July 83 conflagration and consistently and persistently thwarted by the sheer determination, dedication and grit of the Militants who contained the State Forces and had them effectively confined to their barracks: the showdown had become inevitable, the reassertion of their lost authority almost imperative. Started the Vadamaradchy 'Operation Liberation'. Virtually the entire might of the Sri Lankan war machine went into action. It was planned and executed as one massive sweep of the Northern coastal belt, the Vadamaradchy region, Tiger Territory as it was called; the Army, Navy and the Air Force rolled in to subdue its own people. Everything before this State power was blitzed to smithereens. Civilians fled from their homes, they hardly had the time to pick up even the bare essentials. Hundreds lost their lives, mostly the innocents and children. Nearly five thousand young boys and men between the ages of 15 and 40 , were marched into ships and boats lying in wait to transport them to Boosa and similar 'concentration' camps of doubtful notoriety, hostages in interrogation centres, perhaps. It was indeed a disastrous situation. The Militants have had to slink away from the ferocity of the war machine which no guerilla could or want to withstand. They fought determinedly but moral resolves alone do not win battles. The civilians were left to bear the brunt of it all.

Baffled and aghast at the scale of the operation and the destruction it created — temples, churches and hospitals bombed, damaged and destroyed, even apathetic onlookers the world over conceded it was at least breaking butterfly on a wheel. World opinion fumed and scorned at the injustice and the immorality of it all. The Sri Lankan Government reeled under this contemptuous international indictment of a chauvinist Government seeking to annihilate its own peoples to find a military solution to what is often mouthed as a political problem and essentially involving the fundamental rights of a section of its inhabitants. Empty verbiology and encomiums from however high they emanated could not do sufficient recompense for the misery and wanton loss of life sustained by a Community already depleted by the severity of the military option that had been involuntarily foisted on it by obvious desire and design and no less.

The Sri Lankan Army beefed up by its shorterm success in overrunning a part of the North (the entire territory had been lost to the Militants for over two years then) seemed only too anxious to march into Jaffna proper. The Sinhala hawks crowed over their Pyrrhic victory: but the Tamil hearts could never be with them. The morale of the Tigers who bore the main thrust of the attack, seemed beaten. The attack was at once unexpected in its intensity as it was equally misconceived. To expect to hold a territory against the complete disaffection of an entire people is to reckon without the host. It was not easy to withstand the entire war machine of a Government with the primitive weaponry at their disposal then and therefore the guerillas melted away to fight another day. It was their war played according to their rules. They called the tune and none else. The Tamil people for whom they fought were thus left to fend for themselves. Fortunately or unfortunately we are a people endowed with short memories. This attribute is at once the clue to our ability to come out of dire disaster and misfortune unscathed and mentally intact and equally provides the ingenuity (naivete, if you may) to explain our unmitigated selfish approach even to national problems as though they only affected our immediate family circle and no other. Commiserations apart, the spirit of the Tamils in Sri Lanka and abroad had hit its lowest ebb. That was April-May 1987.

It would be a good guess to make if India did not intervene at this stage, militarily, in the dispute. The morale of the Militants was low not merely for the reverses sustained with the Sri Lankan Forces but largely because of the internecine quarrels and the power struggles that began to obsess their activities and resulting in brutal assassinations and killings of compatriots in rival organisations, some no doubt less dedicated than others. It would also be puerile to deny that some of these organisations enjoyed the patronage of Indian sources interested in whittling down the popularity and enthusiasm for the Tigers among the Tamil masses. Meanwhile the Sri Lankan Army was waiting in the wings for the final push and perhaps the only deterrent was the further civilian casualties and adverse propaganda coverage by the world media now devoting front page headines for Sri Lankan atrocities. These are certainly grave considerations even to an already battered Sri Lankan reputation.

Political pundits now argue that the dispute between the Tamils and the Sinhalese could have been better left for either party to settle between themselves, even in 1987. Such plain and wishful thinking over the last thirty years and more had by now consigned even experienced politicians to the dustheap of history. Tamil rights remained an internal matter only if it did not involve minority fundamental rights the denial of which remained their cause for grief. It was a singular lack of appreciation by a racial majority which refused to be magnanimous largely because of the political system foisted upon it and the exploitation of which was the chief concern of scheming politicians anxious for power. Glibly they argued that it was the will of the majority. And that everyone knew was only a racial majority groomed by propaganda doled out by the State and the servile media. This is the five star democracy thathas failed in Sri Lanka. This is the political system that is in the doldrums today and threatens the very fabric of society that lived a harmonious existence over centuries, until fifty years ago. By errors of omission and commission, breach of faith and downright political chicannery the dispute between two peoples of the same Motherland, had become internationalised and their feelings alienated and estranged almost beyond repair. The minoritywas thus left with nothing but a military option and the Government countered it with more force and little logic or any reason. And force begets force.

India's intervention was a natural logic of events. It was a festering footsore right at India's heels. India was not merely the super power of the region concerned with its stability but the segregationist tendencies allowed to develop by sheer force of neglect could itself threaten the very structure that India was straining to maintain. The proximity of Tamil Nadu and the close cultural and linguistic togetherness that the Sri Lankan Tamils always claimed and enjoyed with the sixty million just across the Palk Straits could not be brushed aside whatever New Delhi or the South Block thought of these hard facts diplomatically.

Nor could India forget the one hundred and fifty thousand Tamil refugees who had sought shelter from Army atrocities and arrived on Indian soil as if to claim a birthright vested on them by history. No passports, no visas: they just arrived by any means of transport available: planes, ships, boats and catamarans. India was home from home for the Sri Lankan Tamils.

To vivisect India's role in the Tamil struggle and attribute motives to her intervention on our behalf is not merely

(Contd. on page 23)

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OBITUARY

RAJARATNAM, Pathumanithy — *wife of the late Mr. N. Rajaratnam, and mother of Pushpa Sivananthan (Madras), Selvam Thavasothy (U.K.), Rajagopal (Australia), Bala (Balakrishnan, Transkei), Kidda (Krishnaratne, Zimbabwe), Sunthary Annamalai (Jaffna), Mano Srikantha (U.S.A.), Rengan (Bahrein), and Krishna Selvalingam (Singapore) on 10.3.88 at Jaffna.*

Emmanuel Thuralayah, *born 11.5.1921, passed away under tragic circumstances in Illavalai, Sri Lanka on 25.2.1988. He started his career in the Sri Lankan army, served in the Forest Department, Jaffna and retired after working in the Cement Factory, Kankesanthurai as a works superintendent. He was the son of Mr. and Mrs. David Bastiampillay of Jaffna and leaves behind his beloved wife Philomena, daughters Mrs Mary Emmanuel, Mrs Gertrude Jeyasekeram, Mrs. Yoga James and son Savantharanayagam — 190 Shakespeare Crescent, Manor Park, London E12 6NB.*

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

At Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 4A Castletown Road, London W14 (Phone 01-381 3086/ 4608):

May 1 4.30 p.m. ***Lecture*** *by Prof P.G. Shukla on Adisankara — A great Saint*
6.00 p.m. ***Karnatic Vocal with Veena*** *by Mrs Sivasakti Sivanesan and her students.*

May 14 7.00 p.m. and May 15 6.30 p.m. ***Violin*** *by* ***Lalgudi Jayaraman***

May 27 7.30 p.m. and May 28 7.00 p.m. Bharatanatyam by Mrs Komala Varadan.

May 15 12 Noon: Mahajana College Old Students Association (U.K.) ***Get together and Lunch,*** *Lola Jones Hall, Greaves Place, Off Garratt Lane, Tooting, London SW17.*

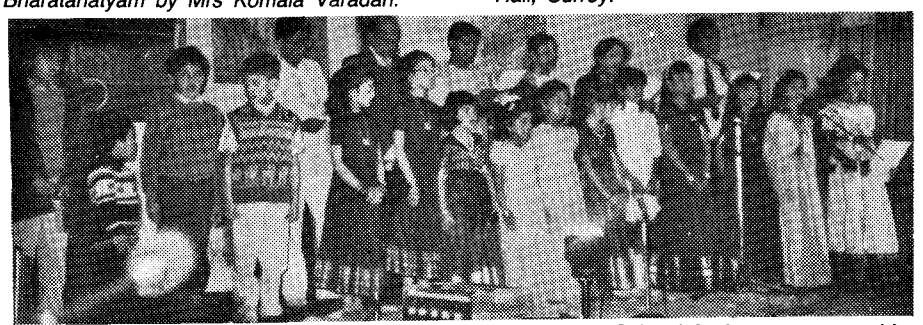
WEDDING BELLS

We congratulate the following couples on their recent marriage:

Ramesh, *(Son of Mr. & Mrs. S. Vaheisvaran, 108 Crestwood Drive, Baulkham Hills, NSW 2153) and* **Dharmini,** *(Daughter of the late Dr. C.S. Krishnamoorthy and Mrs. Krishnamoorthy, 10/18 Drummond Street, Warwick Farm, NSW 2170) on March 30 at Wentworthville Community Centre, Sydney, Australia.*

Shanmugathasan, *(Son of Mr. & Mrs. S. Nagalingam, 72 Mayfield Road, Colombo 13) and* **Sivamalar,** *(Daughter of Dr. & Mrs. V. Sivapalasundram, 14 Sirocco Street, Jamboree Heights, Queensland 4074, Australia) on March 30 at Gintupitiya Sivasubramania Temple Hall, Colombo.*

Aidan, *(Son of Mr. & Mrs. S.K. Verrall, 115 Taynton Drive, Merstham, Surrey) and* **Sashi,** *(Daughter of Dr. & Mrs. R. Thirunavukarasu, 101 Middle Leaford, Stechford, Birmingham B34 6HA) on April 2 at the Mickleham Village Hall, Surrey.*



Pupils and teachers of Wimbledon Tamil School singing the School Anthem, composed by Thurka Thuranthary Thangamma Appakuddy and set to music by Mrs. Sivasakthi Sivanesan, at the commencement of the school performance held on March 26, at the Methodist Church Hall, Raynes Park, London SW20.

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SEARCH OPERATIONS

Search operations are so frequent that hardly a day passes without some part of Jaffna peninsula coming under day curfew declared suddenly over loudspeakers. The night curfew continues even after five months, but the hours have been progressively reduced. The day curfew may last 2 hours and even 2 days, depending on the size of the area searched. Young Tamil males are required to stand in the hot sun for hours. On 13.2.88 a part of a very crowded area of Jaffna town was searched. All men, women and children were ordered to assemble at a particular open space. The assembled people were paraded before IPKF top brass seated in a truck with some informants hidden from view. Meantime, IPKF lower ranks went searching every house and premises in the area under search. On 25.2.88 two different parts of Jaffna town came to be searched by the IPKF — one in the morning and the other in the afternoon. In the second search a number of schoolboys were required to stand in pouring rain. The Rector of nearby St. Patrick's College having learnt of the plight of the schoolboys rushed to the spot and pleaded with the IPKF but he was rebuffed.

LAW AND ADMINISTRATION

The Law Courts in the North have not been opened since the IPKF took control in October 1987. The premises which were partially damaged have now been sealed and barred.

REPORT FROM BATTICALOA

Apart from the ongoing IPKF operations in the East (March 1), a special day and night curfew lasting **84 hours** beginning 6 p.m. on 12.2.88, was declared. During this period a house to house search for 'Tiger' militants was made. Nearly 43,000 male residents were required to assemble at a central spot to be screened by the IPKF with the collaboration of cadres from a rival militant group. Thirty two 'Tiger' militants were picked up, it was reported; a further 12 died in confrontation with the IPKF at Eravir near Batticaloa, it was claimed.

Contd. from page 21

uncharitable but ungrateful. What was born out of this interest only up to now, is the Indo-Sri Lankan Accord that is under fire. It may not have been the best product under the best of circumstances and certainly does not enjoy the concurrence of all parties to the dispute. It is yet the first international covenant that Sri Lanka has made on this Tamil issue and a pledge to the world that minority rights are not to be trampled. The euphoria and goodwill that the Accord generated among the Tamils in the North and East had to be seen to be believed. The Peace Keeping Force that landed was welcomed with flowers and prayers. The mass meeting at the Suthumalai Amman Temple premises and the subsequent gathering thereafter provided the necessary endorsement by the people involved for the path chosen for the solution in view. The Tamils have never been the optimists to expect a complete solution, all in one go. To have their rights guaranteed and ensured by a super power and that by a neighbour like India, was something they desperately needed against the vacillations and backtracking of their own Government and against which they campaigned both inside and outside Sri Lanka after the breaches of faith they experienced all along for the past thirty years. To be elated at this sudden development and when all seemed lost after the Vadamaradchy; disaster, the scales were turned and the mood jubilant. How then did this feeling of gratitude and gratification turn sour among the civilians, particularly in Jaffna?

Have our perceptions been oversimplified and wrong? And does that include India? Why has it not been possible for the civilian groups to express themselves freely? Does the barrel of the gun rule the roost in Jaffna? Has not India made a catastrophic blunder in trying to isolate the Militant Groups and particularly the Tigers from the Tamil population with whom they are in fact so closely identified and it is so impossible to separate? To arm dissident groups motivated by envy and greed against dedicated liberation groups is to cut the ground under your own feet and belittles the nobility of India's venture.

Colombo *'Anbhan'*

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